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LYRICAL RECREATIONS.

Lyrical Recreations.

BY

SAMUEL WARD.

Je vous donne avecque ma foy
Ce qu'il y a de mieulx en moy.

Old French Love Song.

New York and London :

D. APPLETON & CO.,

BOSTON : ROBERTS BROTHERS.

1865.

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TO

HENRY HALL WARD,

Treasurer of the New York State Society of the Cincinnati,

PRESIDENT OF THE NEW YORK CLUB,

FAMILIAE CAPITI,

TRUE GENTLEMAN, KINSMAN,

AND FRIEND.

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To Samuel L. M. Barlow.

My Dear Barlow :

HEN a bachelor, over-ripe, takes to himself a wife in the bud, he is apt to imagine that he owes his friends some explanations. It is the privilege of youth to woo Euterpe, and my hair is gray. *Qui s'excuse s'accuse*,—I know; but, when the accusation is sure to come, the excuse may as well get the start of it; and turning rhymester as I do on the wrong side of half a century, I venture to entreat you, who bear all burdens so lightly, to circulate my *apologia* among those who may care to hear it.

You, at least, remember that I “took” the lyrical fever in the spring of 1860, “in the natural way,” as unconsciously as Pierre and Elsie caught the measles, and almost as fatally as our people have taken the gold-fever. In mining parlance, the discovery of this unsuspected “pocket” of verse afforded me equal pleasure and surprise. It is true that the *bonanza* barely “held out” two years, and then “split up into horses.” But all veins, alas! too often “peter out,” and if mine be, perchance, proven a Mariposa, there are no other stockholders to be caught by the collapse.

But I little dreamed, when your partiality was commending my early couplets, and your good taste criticising their defects, that I should not be quit of the malady until it should have thrown off as many lyrics as the appointed years of man; still less that, after keeping them three years, instead of the Horatian nine, I should have the temerity to publish them.

With my gratitude for your encouraging

readiness to share the risk and onus of giving flight to these fledglings, arises the regret that I cannot guarantee you against such disappointment as the "manager" in the *Postillon de Lonjumeau* would have felt, had his way-side tenor made a fiasco;— one must sing loud to be heard amid the roar of cannon. At least, however, I can promise to behave less shabbily than *Don Giovanni* when he makes off after his "serenade," and devolves the remainder drubbing from his own to the shoulders of Leporello. And this the more readily, that if a man is justly held to greater care in distilling the verses he offers to the public, than in preparing any other essence of the brain, the true standards of success in this art are so high that none but a coxcomb need be greatly cast down by falling short of them.

I am sorry to own my inability to work out more extensively your suggestion about the naturalization of the Horatian measures. Some faint imitation of them I have, indeed, attempted in "The Tree and the Shadow," "The *Chocolatière*," and "Zampita." But,

since 1800 years have failed to produce a second Horace — and as many more may elapse before the appearance of another Béranger — I may surely be pardoned for believing that it was easier for the Sabine bard,

“ Princeps Æolium Carmen ad Italos
Deduxisse modos,”

than for any one to adapt them to

“ Our harsh Northern, whistling, grunting guttural,
Which we ’re obliged to hiss and spit and sputter all.”

Under favor of the great masters just cited, I have, here and there, inscribed a lyric to some one of those whose friendly lamps have lighted me through the dark, when, like the foolish virgins, I had suffered my oil to burn to waste. Inviting a party of friends to assist at the launch of a sloop, and then carrying them to sea against their will, is, perhaps, sharp practice: but, should the frail craft founder, they must remember, with good Sir Humphrey Gilbert, that “ Heaven is as near by sea as by land;” while if the cruise terminates

in the "Fortunate Isles," they will, perhaps, thank me for a pleasant episode in the Voyage of Life, and I shall be overpaid.

Printing is the costume of Poetry; as Hood used to say: "tells the story." You will find one long piece, "Epimenides" (the Cretan Rip-Van-Winkle), which I should scarcely have ventured to dedicate to our eminently crystal-minded friend, Mr. Charles O'Connor, in the somewhat cloudy and indefinite shape it now wears, had I first seen it in the undeceptive daylight of type. It was intended to express the natural reflections of a wanderer, long absent from his quiet village-home, who returns to find it one roar of spindles; and if it fail to produce a corresponding impression upon the mind of the reader, I can only say, like Madame de Pompadour to the country beauty, who gawked and stumbled in her unaccustomed court-dress, when entering the presence of the king, "it is too late to retreat."

Like Dr. Newman's "Apology for his Life," this apologetic preface has grown un-

der my pen till itself needs too an apology. That — your generous friendship must make for it — and for me. Hide this little book among the priceless treasures of your library — a piper of Hamelin's coffin among the golden sarcophagi of kings — and remember only, that in it

“Je vous donne avecque ma foy
Ce qu'il y a de mieulx en moy.”

S. W.

NEW YORK HOTEL,
January 27th, 1865.



WHEN in my walks I meet some ruddy lad —
Or swarthy man — with tray-beladen head,
Whose smile entreats me, or his visage sad,
To buy the images he moulds for bread,

I think that, though his poor Greek Slave in chains,
His Venus and her Boy with plaster dart,
Be, like the Organ-Grinder's quavering strains,
But farthings in the currency of art;

Such coins a kingly effigy still wear —
Let metals base or precious in them mix —
The painted vellum hallows not the Prayer,
Nor ivory nor gold the Crucifix.

Habe nun, ach! Philosophie,
Juristerei und Medicin,
Und leider auch Theologie
Durchaus studirt, mit heißem Bemühn.
Da steh' ich nun, ich armer Thor!
Und bin so klug als wie zuvor.

Faust.

I have, alas! Philosophy,
Juristery and Medicine,
And, woe is me! Theology,
At length dug through with study keen,
And stand here now a fool as poor
In wealth and wisdom as before!

FAUST.

To Henry W. Longfellow.

The King of the Troubadours.

RENÉ, King of Provence, when he felt his sceptre
glide away,

Called upon his minstrels many, each to sing a
parting lay :

“Song is but Prayer set to music, therefore
pray for me, good friends,

Not because my waning power scarce beyond
these walls extends—

But that, with my poor dominion, taketh flight
the modest hoard

Which enabled me to welcome Art's dear children
round my board.”

Then, in turn their rebecs sweeping, minstrel
after minstrel sang,

Till, with wailing and with weeping, all the sad-
dened echoes rang,

Rang a quire of grief lamenting the dispersion
of that band

Thenceforth desolate as butterflies when storms
assail the land.

When the last his virelay ended, sobs sighed
chorus in the hall

As the King, with arms extended, waved a bless-
ing over all.

Then, as glows the westering sun within a cloud
of fleecy white,

Beamed his visage, 'mid its silvery locks, with in-
spiration's light,

As he grasped his crusty viol, woke to life its
every wire,

Till the notes flew out like sparks when yields
the smitten steel its fire ;

Sparks that set his aged voice ablaze, until it
towered high

As a swan's whose folded pinions never more
shall cleave the sky.

“We have all been too long dreaming; from our
dreams we now awake.

Sorrow teaches us God's meaning; thankfully the
lesson take.

Man was not made for inaction midst the dal-
liances of life,

But to labor for His glory who hath led him
through its strife.

He decrees that you shall sing your way through
castle, dorp, and mart,

Leaving me to spend my lonely days in culture
of our Art;

For, though Charles the Bold and Louis have
despoiled the monarch's throne,

This poor viol, which they scorned to seize, is still
the minstrel's own,

And may prove a sceptre that shall wield a more
enduring sway
Than his reign which, like a bird of passage,
vanished in a day.

“What surviveth of the glory of King David’s
crown and sword,
But the Psalms that Monarch hoary sang in
honor of the Lord ?
Are not Orpheus, Anacreon, and the Sightless
Bard of Troy
As immortal as Achilles who made war his only
joy ?
When the eagle drops a feather, ’tis divided,
and one end
Plumes the arrow of the bow that needs Ulysses’
arm to bend ;
While the other is the Poet’s pen, to ages hand-
ing down
Valiant deeds embalmed by measure in the
amber of renown.

“Go, then, forth and preach the Gospel of the
Lyre in every land,
Softening men with its sweet teachings by the
voice and by the hand.
Let each one, in his vocation, found a kingdom
of his own
In the People’s hearts, which—not his court—
sustain a monarch’s throne.

“Sing the praise of Him who made you, and of all
that He hath made;
Sing the charms of woman; sing the terrors of the
warrior’s blade,
Till, its silk to gold transumed, the thread of song
become a chain,
Leading men up to the gates of death as in a
wedding train;
And I hear rude Northern wanderers trol, be-
fore my gate, the lays
Sung by Réné and his *Trouvères* in their young
and happy days.”

Like the leaves that skirt the forest, when they
 droop with April's rain,

Hung the minstrels' tearful eyelids when the king
 intoned his strain.

Like those leaves, when clouds disperse before
 the charge of Heaven's patrol,

Caught their lifted lids the sunshine of the king's
 undaunted soul.

When he ceased, as murmur wind-swept pines,
 their voices woke the air

With a chaunt in which a jubilee gleamed
 through deep chords of prayer.

Then, with souls cheered by his benison, they
 left him one by one,

And, at even, in his banquet-hall King René sat
 alone.

Since that day on which those *Trouvères* left
 their crownless King forlorn,

Full four hundred times have holy chimes rung
 in the Christmas morn.

Who shall say how many a lay, of church and
feast and dance and song,
Is an echo of the voices of that poor disbanded
throng ?
As I sing I hear them ringing through the caverns
of the Past,
And my feeble breath but wafts some minstrel's
cadence down the blast.



To John T. Doyle.



Friar-Life.

SEMI-RIGID, half-elastic,
Was the pious, old monastic
 Scheme of life ;
When the lenten bread of Heaven
With a dash of human leaven
 Aye was rife.

Through dark ages, they kept burning
The forbidden lamps of learning
 In their cells ;
As, in Afric's sands, the rover,
With protecting stones, doth cover
 The glad wells.

And, with extacy, the stainless
Mother loved they, who, in painless
Travail, bore
HIM whose birth and crucifixion
Loosed the bonds of our affliction
Evermore.

Lordly herds, on meadows, thriving
Under vineyards, they, by shriving
Sinners, got.
Pious hinds their wealth augmented,
And their broad lands tilled, contented
With their lot.

That the Friars worldly pleasure,
In their lay-days, without measure
Had enjoyed,
And discovered that the madness
Of the revel's sinful gladness
Left a void,

Taught them that the peasant's toil
On the mute, but grateful, soil
Is a fate
Happier than their wild ambition,
Who aspire unto Patrician
Pomp and state.

And the monk, so old and shabby,
Seemed the image of his Abbey,
Gray and hoary :
Winter's rudest blasts defying,
With its inward and undying
Warmth of glory.

Chimed the convent-bell a marriage ?
He uncoiled his austere carriage,
And was mortal ;
As, with benediction saintly,
Ushered he the fond ones quaintly
Through hope's portal.

But a sad yet tender riot
Sometimes thrilled his pulse's quiet
 With strange charms,
When the holy-water glistened
On the new-born infant, christened
 In his arms.

And you saw each waxen finger
With unconscious twitchings linger
 Round the boy ;
As though yearnings, pent and hidden,
Cried within, for the forbidden
 Human joy.

And his eyes, through fond mists glowing,
Saw the babe in stature growing,
 Till the day
When himself its soul might foster,
And, with creed and *Pater-noster*,
 Point the way.

Like the glass a sigh hath clouded,
Brighter shone his gaze when, crowded
Near the font,
He beheld God's children pressing,
And bestowed a warmer blessing
Than his wont.

Called the death-bell's lingering, knelling
Prince or peasant from life's dwelling
To depart ?
By those Heaven-sent stewards shriven,
Who the imps of sin had driven
From his heart,

Each a message, when he kissed him,
Whispered softly and dismissed him
On glad wing ;
Like the bark that carries tidings
From a Viceroy's distant 'bidings
To his King.

Fiercely they rebuked the scorner,
Tearfully consoled the mourner

 In his sorrow ;
Eyes, all moist to-day with sadness,
Shone serene midst festive gladness
 On the morrow.

Thus abroad, with zeal unending,
Rich and poor alike befriending,

 Lived the Friars :
Vigil, fast, and flagellations
Mortified the world's temptations
 And desires.

And when waxed a poor monk paler,
Until granted him Life's gaoler

 His release,
Earth's sad stewardship resigning,
Homeward flew his spirit, pining,—
 Into peace.

To Joseph G. Cogswell.

Time the Auctioneer.

STANDS the clock within the hall,
Like a monk against the wall,
Like a hooded monk with eyes
Owl-like, spectral, solemn, wise,
In whose sockets, moon and sun
Mimic phase and season run ;
While, beneath the face austere,
 “Going ! Gone ! Going ! Gone !”
Time, the ruthless Auctioneer,
 Sells the moments one by one ;
Moments all too cheaply sold !
Save to Love, for lavished gold !
Save to crime, with dagger bold !

Four and twenty times a day
Step the Morrice-dancers gay,
From their tire-room in the clock,
At the hour's impatient knock ;
Wind in courteous rigadoon,
Wind in cadence with the tune,
Vanish with its blithesome strain,
 "Going ! Gone ! Going ! Gone !"
Time his hammer raps again.

 Hark ! A groan ! Hark ! A groan !
Groan for that bright hour just past,
Breathed by one would hold it fast,
For the next shall be his last !

Through the western oriel fall
Sunset glories in the hall.
Thus at eve they ever pour
Rainbowed rapture on the floor.
Now the Virgin's lips are pressed
On yon cherub's sculptured rest,
Now ascends a crimson stain
From the storied window-pane,

Till the light of evening skies
Glimmers in those sleepless eyes.
Drink, poor monk, the lingering rays,
 “Going! Gone! Going! Gone!”
Brief their lustre! Brief thy gaze
 On the sun! Day is done!

Pensive, in the twilight hour,
Sits the maiden in her bower;
Broods the felon in his tower.
One—the noon a bride shall see!
One—at noon shall cease to be!



The Glass-Blower.

FROM chaos, with creative hand
And fiery breath and magic wand,
I saw an artisan expand
 And mould a crystal earth,
Where Plain and Hill and Sea and Isle
Were blended in the sunny smile
 That saw our Planet's birth.

Where trees sprang up, whose foliage, dyed
Unfadingly in Summer's pride,
Rude Autumn's withering breath defied,
 And Winter's icy blasts ;
And ships, becalmed on wrinkled seas,
Though full their sails, felt not the breeze
 That bent their tapering masts.

A city rose upon the shore
And, on its quay, the stevedore
Awaited to unload and store
 That spell-bound navy's freight ;
While on the scaffold felons stood,
Unhanged above the multitude,
 Before the prison-gate.

In gardens of ungathered fruit,
Young lovers sat whose tongues were mute,
Nor breathed its spell the anxious lute
 Within the maiden's hands ;
They smiled, in bliss without regret,
As only they who feel not yet
 The altar's silken strands.

And when the adept's task was done,
I saw the boy, for whom was spun
That globe, its beauties, one by one,
 With childish ardor greet ;

Then clutch it with such eager grip
That mountain, city, tree, and ship
Fell shivered at his feet.

And thought—when down shall shade his chin,
And Fancy mould a world akin
To that bright Earth, unstain'd by sin,
The adept's fingers wrought—
He'll clutch and lose it, as a boy,
The bubbles which he saw with joy
In rainbow meshes caught.

Yet, when his disenchanted eyes
Shall cease to see the mirage rise,
Between him and the desert's skies,
Above the phantom wave,
He'll halt and kneel and cross his hands,—
Nor long the Simoon's shifting sands
Will mark the new-made grave !

Panacea.

WHEN skies are gray, and droops my mateless heart
 Within this attic drear,
I wander forth into the restless mart,
 Through labor's busy sphere,
Or thread the moist and dismal lanes,
 Where poverty reveals its pains.

My wind-swept garret then a palace seems,
 A tropic sun my fire—
My books a mine of bliss, while cheerly steams
 The kettle's soothing quire.
My toast is made, my tea is brewed
Once more with smiling gratitude.

Missing Page

Missing Page

Whilst I, comparing mine with sadder stars,
Thus magnify its light,
Which seems to those encaged by misery's bars
With happiest lustre bright ;
The lot of captive, drudge, or slave
Is brighter far, beside the grave,

Than mine, compared with that by them deplored,
Or than the grander fate
Of Cræsus, revelling amidst his hoard,
A king without a state—
Though, for his standard, taketh he
The measure of my poverty.



Montauk Light.

LATITUDE $41^{\circ} 4' 12''$ N. LONGITUDE $71^{\circ} 51' 54''$ W.

BEFORE the stars appear on high,
I open wide my Cyclops eye,
 Like them unseen by day ;
Though, while they roll in distant realms
My vacant face still guides the helms
 That o'er the waters stray.

The only living things I view,
At times, are cormorant and mew ;
 Yet, from my stage-box grand,
I watch the drama of the skies,
And hear, through awful symphonies,
 The Storm-King lead his band.

When clouds obscure the starry host,
My smile beams brighter on the tost
 And storm-imperilled ships ;
While rock-cleft surges shoreward hie,
Like troubled souls whose bodies lie
 Where yon horizon dips.

Then booms the signal-gun its prayer,
And counts, with pulse of wild despair,
 The moments that remain
To those upon some bark forlore,
Ere from its wreck their souls shall soar
 Beyond the hurricane.

The dawning day uncurtains night.
As on a plain where fierce in fight
 At eve men charged and fell—
The slain, amid bale, plank, and spar,—
Though undefaced by bruise or scar,—
 The Tempest's victory tell,

On serpent waves, that languidly
Unroll their coils along the sea,
 With victims satiate,
Until to sharp resentment urged,
By jutting points of rocks submerged,
 Their dripping jaws dilate.

Yet as to Shakespeare, so to me,
Thaleia and Melpomene
 Alternate come and go ;
Once more flits by the merry fleet
Of barks, as in a royal street
 The chariots to and fro.

The full-plumed ship, the wingless car
That, shuttle-like, to strands afar
 Bears that bright thread of gold
Which weaves, with human sympathy,
Between the warps of sea and sky,
 The New World to the Old.

And I survive the barks that ply
Above the wrecks and crews that lie
 Beneath the glutton wave,
As stately cenotaphs outlive
The mourners who have met to grieve
 Around a new-made grave.

The cross, upon the only fane
That decks some lone and dreary plain,
 Sees not the temples fair
Which, stretching in a zone sublime,
Take up, in turn, its belfry's chime
 And girt the earth with prayer :

Nor I, adown the seaboard line,
My giant kin, with eyes benign,
 On keys and headlands ramp ;
Like pickets posted on the shore,
Where quicksands lurk and breakers roar,
 Before the Atlantic camp.

As when a father shares his gold,
The sun, ere day's last knell is tolled,
 Confides to each a ray,
And, like a captain, when the word
And pass at change of guard are heard,
 He bids us watch till day,

And scan the Orient wilderness,
Until the Baptist star shall bless
 Our strained and weary sight,
Above the dawn's first timid streak
Ere blushes dye its pallid cheek
 For all the sins of night.



Hymn to Mars.

SINCE ages dim in deathless sleep,
As knights in bronze sepulchral keep
 O'er tombs their silent guard,
Thy lone watch thou, with stately pace,
Hast measured in creation's race,
 Mars with the golden beard!

But brighter glows thy ruddy eye,
When Heav'n's grand minuet brings thee nigh *
 To Earth whilom endeared :
And, o'er thy fiery cheek, a smile
Of happy dreams doth play the while,
 Mars with the golden beard!

* Written in June, 1860, when Mars, in his perigee, had shortened his greatest distance from the earth some forty-eight thousand miles.

Dreams of thy brief terrestrial home
On Tiber's banks, in infant Rome —

Where thou art still revered —
When Rhea left the vestal shrine
To bear thee Romulus Quirinine,
Mars with the golden beard !

Creation's mighty problem solved
And, out of chaos dark, evolved

The star for man prepared,
With thee there came a spirit band,
From higher spheres, to grace the land,
Mars with the golden beard !

Like birds in spring on Arctic rocks,
Or mariners, who, from ocean's shocks,

To some lone isle have veered,
Cleaving ethereal realms of light,
Ye landed on Olympus' height,
Mars with the golden beard !

They on glad plains, in moulds of grace
And beauty, fashioned our race.

 In Etna's caverns seared,
The sword to Vulcan gavest thou,
From which he forged the primal plough,
 Mars with the golden beard !

To nature wild abandoned long,
In sportive dance and festive song,
 Earth's children first were reared ;
Thy brother Gods, loved, drank, and ate,
E'en Zeus himself threw off all state,
 Mars with the golden beard !

But thou didst teach the sons of toil
To delve the brown glebe's pinguid soil
 'Neath flowery meads unspared ;
In vernal months to plant and sow,
To harvest when days shorter grow,
 Mars with the golden beard !

And when, years o'er, their task was done
From earth rebounding to the sun,
By man more loved than feared,
Each sought his planet-home afar,
And with them, thou, red God of War,
Mars with the golden beard !



The Maiden's Children.

SUGGESTED BY MISS STEBBINS' STATUE OF THE LOTUS
EATER.

A MAIDEN in her summer bloom,
Whose heart had neither felt love's thorn
Nor yet rejected love with scorn,
Lamented thus her sex's doom :

“Ah me ! whose gaze dare not engage
In mystic tilt with belted knight,
Nor venture, e'en in sport, to plight
A glance to squire or beardless page ;

“Exposed to cold and sordid eyes,
Like Georgian nymph, in Eastern mart,
Who only may her hand impart
To him whose gold her beauty buys !

“Whilst — like the incandescent blush,
Which, with feigned warmth, doth tantalize
Earth's breast congealed 'neath Arctic skies —
Electric thrills my being flush ;

“As though within me gleamed a fire
Unfed — a glowing, not a burning —
A coming thirst, a nascent yearning,
A subtle, nameless, vague desire.

“Ah ! would my soul from Earth were free ;
For, like the puzzled bird that flies
'Twixt fowler's net and serpent's eyes,
I dread my sex's destiny !”

An angel heard the maiden's sigh,
And gently led her spirit where,
In dreams, she saw a temple, fair
With chiselled forms not doomed to die ;

The brow of Jove, serene, august —
The breathing, almost blushing, frame
Of Psyche, whose ethereal name
The soul takes when it leaves the dust —

Apollo listening to his lyre —
Minerva softened by its strains —
And she within whose sea-born veins
Forever burns Love's unquenched fire —

The Graces three — the sacred Nine,
Whose snowy brows and vestal hearts
Defied the Boy-god's flame-tipped darts ;
And mortals more than half divine.

But when the maiden's slumber broke,
Those god-like shapes, through memory stealing
And Art's ideal world revealing,
To new resolves her soul awoke.

A roofless shrine deep in the glade —
Where leant, neglected, moss-bestained,
The marble god who there had reigned —
Hallowed her vow, with fervor made

On bended knee : " The unwed Bride
Of Art divine I'll henceforth be ;
And rear a spotless family,
With all a mother's love and pride.

" My travail thus shall realize,
Without a pang, her chastest joys ;
In snowy marble shall my boys,
Beneath my fostering hands arise.

“Since to their frames I may not give
The quickening pulses of my heart,
My soul its graces shall impart
And in their stainless bodies live.

“Their snowy shapes, without defect;
Angelic beauty shall display ;
No inborn sin of mortal clay,
Shall envious eye in them detect.”

And, as a form embalmed in song
Awakens to the music sweet,
Which lulled it in its winding-sheet,
So did the maiden's touch, ere long,

Awake to life, with pious art,
The graceful phantom here congealed ;
A Phenix, though in snow revealed,
Out of the ashes of her heart.

The Incomplete Picture.

LAST 'summer, in the Catskill range,
I took a sketch, and thought it good,
Of yonder dale — and now 'tis strange,
The picture chimes not with my mood.

And yet the brush's motley trace
Repeats the landscape to my eye;
The hills, with grave or smiling grace
Of chiselled profile, fret the sky.

The knoll still shrinks beyond the lawn
To nothingness 'twixt loftier steeps,
Gay creepers on the cottage fawn,
And o'er the brook the willow weeps.

The unchained skiff upon the bank
Its shoulder rests, as in a doze ;
The oars press down the rushes dank,
The lake with yellow sunset glows.

Yon urchin toward the water sways
His oxen, lightened of their yoke ;
The air they breathe is autumn's haze,
Or Indian summer's ehilly smoke.

Yet, like some tune that wakes no more,
Though sweetly sung in after years,
Emotions which it roused of yore,
The dance's throb—the burial's tears ;

My canvas mirror, tame and cold,
Lacks sleeping Nature's living glow ;
Like shrouds its shadows wrap the wold,
Nor with the sunset seem to grow.

Ah ! now I see its chief defect ;
My hand refused, beneath the porch,
To seat the lass with garlands decked
Whose eyes took up day's fading torch !



The Tree and the Shadow.

THE oak still haunts the grove,
From which poor Joe,
Ten years ago,
Took the leap of death, for love.

As circles in a lake,
Which shun the stone
By boyhood thrown,
Recoiled the trees of the brake,

Far from that oak of doom,
As children fear
The atmosphere
Of the phantom-haunted tomb.

The woodman's loud alarm
Drew young and old,
Where stiff and cold
Joe hung on that oak's right arm.

They cut his body loose,
But left the rope,
That stifled hope,
To dangle without its noose,

And swing to every breeze,
Scaring the herds
And forest birds,
To the shade of other trees.

And children held their breath
At work or play,
The sunniest day,
When they passed that tree of death.

From that gray morn till now,
 No foliage green
 Hath e'er been seen
To sprout on that fatal bough :

That devil's fishing rod,
 From which long dangled
 The line that angled
For souls in the sea-green sod.

Ere Willie went to sea,
 Within the shade
 Of that lone glade,
He whispered his vows to me.

The moon was in Orion,
 When, from his breast
 The love supprest
Leapt like an ambushed lion.

Climbing the Eastern sky,
A cloud arose,
Like fleecy snows
Capping a mountain high,

Until it decked the moon,
As laces veil
A maiden pale,
Who is wed in sunny June.

The cloud its blue way felt,
In calm ascent,
And soon was blent
With Orion's radiant belt.

Then shone the moon a queen,
That belt her crown,
From which drooped down
White plumes, with diamonds between.

Behind that cloudy height
Her rays then set,
And chang'd to jet
The azure garments of night.

Thridding the ghostly glade
With claspéd hands,
(Gold ran Time's sands),
In tender converse we strayed,

Till changed the midnight bell
My joy to sadness
And his to madness,
With its clang of long farewell !

Dropping her snowy veil,
The moon betrayed
Within the glade
Its skeletons grim and pale.

And as I homeward started,
I turned my face
To see the place
Where Willie and I had parted.

Beneath the haunted tree,
The oak of blood,
My Willie stood ;
And it froze my heart to see

“

His shadow on the sward,
Hanging below
The fatal bough,
At the end of that murderous cord !

Friction.

[JUNE.]

LIE thou there, black pack of care
I have carried full months nine !
Let me seek the greenwood fair
While the summer's glory's mine.

*

Far from me the miser's lot—
Beadle of a golden shrine—
Whilst, by nature's toil begot,
All the summer's wealth is mine.

In the masquerade of flowers
Let the Cedar, Larch and Pine
Mourn stern winter's vanished towers,
So the summer's joy be mine.

Ninety times the sun shall rise
Earlier from his couch of brine,
And shall linger in the skies
Whilst the summer's bliss is mine.

By the stream, as when a child
Shrinking from the snake-like vine,
I will wander, thrush-beguiled,
While the summer's glory's mine.

Sunbeams jewelling the showers
Which the knotted clouds untwine,
Over thirsty fields and bowers,
Are the summer's gems and mine.

Strolling through its paths of bliss
Skirted by the jessamine,
I will sing and dance and kiss
While the summer's glory's mine ;

Till the grapes the robins spare
Shall redeem their pledge in wine,
Let me glean the treasures rare
Of the summer's sparkling mine.



Leaves and Stars.

[SEPTEMBER.]

YESTERDAY, when Autumn's fire
Flushed the Maple and the Briar
Till they crimsoned, as a maid
Who her love hath just betrayed,
Disappeared my Summer dream,
Like the picture in a stream
Which the wanton breezes chase
From the liquid mirror's face.

Was each reddening leaf the ghost
Of a precious moment lost ?
Else why should the Woodland's glow
Thrill me with such sense of woe,

That from Summer's dying bed,
Like a frightened boy, I fled,
Hastening to the changeless town
With its stony smile and frown?

Vain the coward hope! For night
Brought a monitor in sight
Sternier than those dying leaves,
Sadder than September's sheaves.
Lo! Orion stalks between
Aldebáran and the sheen
Sparkling Sirius, in disdain,
Sheds upon the Warrior's train.

Warrior — Hunter! Like a bird
Serpent-charmed, thy blazing sword
Holds me as it were the blade
O'er a prisoned monarch swayed.
Sword of menace! Blade of fear
Shearing from my life a year!
Shall I see thee gleam again
O'er another twelvemonth slain?

October Lay.

I.—NATURE.

STORMY day of mid October !
Nature sees thy blasts disrobe her
 Forests of their charms ;
Sees, like sparks from forges flying,
Fall the leaves of Summer dying
 In gray Autumn's arms.

As a mother, to her tender
Babes, her raiment doth surrender
 In the wintry hours ;
Busy in the tempest's watches,
With a quilt of many patches,
 Covereth she the flowers.

As escape the wingéd legions
Of the air, from Arctic regions,
 Pale with sunless cold ;
Gales, in search of tropic fires
Rushing, wake the thousand lyres
 Of the Druid wold.

Green, midst Autumn's fading splendor,
Swing the lonely willow's tender
 Fringes, o'er the brook ;
As though, fresh from Ocean's portal,
Some fair Nereid immortal
 There her ringlets shook.

Circling zephyrs, with caresses,
Gently sway those drooping tresses
 Sheltered by the grove ;
Whilst its giant tree-tops, braving
Ruder blasts, are madly waving
 In the air above.

II. — M A N.

Stormy day of mid October !
I, poor drunkard, waxing sober,
 Feel thy pelting rain,
Fierce as shot, my cheeks assailing,
Driven by the blast whose wailing
 Heralds winter's reign.

As I plod with weary measure,
Conscience tolls the knell of pleasure ;
 Oh ! the Summer hours !
Gone are now their joys enchanting,
Leaving only phantoms, haunting
 Memory's leafless bowers.

On the leaves the wayside strewing,
I, in each a moment rueing,
 Look with tearful eyes ;

Look, as were they corpses serried
On a battle-field, ere buried
Never more to rise.

Blows the north-wind sharp and biting,
Scatters dreams of bliss inviting,
Rain-drops burn like fire,
And the fire my breast tormenting,
Unextinguished, unrelenting,
Withers all desire.

Though, like spray from storm-lashed surges,
Whip the forest's leaves thy scourges,
Fearful Hurricane !
Leaflets, erst Spring's welcome bringing,
To the willow fondly clinging,
Bright as hope remain.

Song of the Wren.

THE summer's joyous warblers away
Have flown from November's frown,
And, midst the palsied woodland's decay,
I reign on my perch of hemlock spray,
A monarch without a crown.

In early spring came the Oriole,
To foster her orange brood,
Ere crept the rattlesnake from his hole
Or the dormant Owl his stern patrol
Resumed, in the tropic wood.

The Thristle brown and the Catbird gray,
With the timid Redbreast came,
And the Blackbird and the Bobolink gay,
With answering notes took up the lay
Of the Groesbeck's throat of flame.

Out of last year's leaves and grasses sere
And the gray rock's mossy beard,
In tufts, or copses shrouding the mere,
Or 'neath the Catalpa's flapping ear,
Their nests they merrily reared.

While lasted the spring-tide's quickening hours,
Their carols the forest thrilled,
They summoned the bee to opening flowers
When honey, from April's balmy showers,
The sun in their cups distilled.

To quiet their nestlings' plaintive cry
Like flashes they clave the air,
Now chasing the golden dragon-fly,
Now preying upon the insect fry
Or the spider in his lair.

Like guests who flit from a summer *fête*,
Aweary of dance and play,
Ere the motley fireworks scintillate,
In starry pennons, before the gate
Of night, and awake the day ;

They fled when the hoar frost first congealed
On the clover's flower-reft blade,
And Autumn her tawny dyes revealed,
In the scattered spoils by road and field
Of the Summer's masquerade.

They fled as worldly parasites fly
From the prodigal's dying bed,
And the only mourner left am I
To witness the funeral pageantry
Of Nature burying her dead.

The squirrel sleeps in the hollow tree
Or munches his winter store,
The partridge crops fat berries in glee,
The quail roams gleaning the stubble free,
And the meadow-lark the moor.

When spread the Oak his pall o'er the flowers,
The silver Maple grew pale,
And a crimson flushed the ivied bowers
Where 'neath the Dogwood, in fervid hours,
Had blossomed the Orchis frail.

The Hickory's green to gold then turned,
Yet clave to the fruitful bough,
While the Catbriar, like a miser spurned
In death, was stripped of its leaves, which burned
Like coals in the muddy slough.

The Gum's leaves will with the rainbow vie
Till from the Heavens, o'ercast
With frowns no longer checked by the eye
Of the sun, rebellious snows shall fly
On the ruthless Arctic blast.

But his realms their absent Lord again,
In Spring, shall awake from sleep,
And my sisters will cheer their little Wren
With newest songs from the grove and glen,
Where the mocking-birds vigil keep.

To Julia Romana Howe.

Falconry.

SORCERER.

“IF, to avert, O king,
The doom of death at dawn,
My voice had summoned thee,
I should deserve thy scorn.

“To save my worthless life
These lips shall frame no prayer
Nor ask a boon of thee ;
But if thy daughter fair,

“What time the noose shall bind
My throat at break of day,
Will smile upon me from
Yon lattice o’er the way ;

“And round her snowy neck
The lilac sash will wear
Which girt her waist that eve
My hand was torn from there ;

“And let its waving bands,
Which fell below her knee,
Appear to hold her looped
As will the halter me :

“And last—if, when I drop,
Her head shall sink beneath
The casement-sill, as though
Resolved to share my death,

“Pledge this, and ask what boon
A wizard may impart —
A spark to fire thy veins,
A hoard to freeze thy heart.”

KING.

“All this and more I grant —
Thy life and her white hand,
The sceptre and the crown
By which I rule the land,

“Whereof thou shalt be king,
And I will go my ways,
So thou’lt impart the spell
Of never-ending days.”

SORCERER.

“The kneeling boor, whose shoulder
Is smitten by thy sword,
Arises, by the spell
Of kingly words — a lord.

“But whom my wand shall touch,
Be high or low his birth,
My whispered charm can make
The richest of the earth.

“The shibboleth of life
Would lose my soul, if told,
For what I ask, be thine
The charm of endless gold.”

KING.

“So thou wilt prove that spell
Upon the chains that hold
Thy body, and transmute
Their iron into gold ;

“My daughter from yon lattice
Shall smile on thee, nor falter
When, in the morn, the hangman
Shall loop thee with the halter :

“The lilac sash she wore,
The night I found thy grasp
Around her in the garden,
Her snowy neck shall clasp:

“And on the lattice-bow
Its waving ends I’ll tie,
That she may seem to thee
Like thee about to die;

“And when beneath thy feet
The fatal bolt is sped,
I swear that she shall bow,
Saluting thee, her head.”

SORCERER.

“Now cross you hazel wand
Upon thy royal sword,
And swear by Him who died
That thou wilt keep thy word.

“’Tis well—dismiss these slaves,
Now take the hazel wand:
The serpent-head in thine,
The tail in my right hand.

“Thine ear bring close and listen,
And after me recite
The measured incantation,
And grasp the hazel tight.

“Nay, open not thine eyes
So wide, as in dismay;
No coward will the Gnome
Who guards the mine obey.

“The Sprite must know a master
Or else the master he:
The second rune is faster;
Repeat it after me.

“Thy face is pale, O monarch !
And all alive thy hair.
Pause not ! or of the malice
Of Gnome and Sprite beware.

* * * * *

“’Tis said—now touch my chains,
Ha ! they grow yellow straight,
And from my wrists I feel
Them hang with heavier weight.

“Now get the charm by rote ;
A word misplaced rebounds
As from a rock the ball
Which him who shot it wounds.

“Ah, so ! these chains thou fain
Wouldst in the furnace try ?
Exchange them—and thou’lt find
Their gold no jugglery.”

At dawn, beneath the gibbet,
Serene the wizard stood;
And saw within the lattice
The princess he had wooed.

Around her neck the sash
As round his throat the cord;
Then knew he that the king
Had kept his royal word.

For, by its fastened ends,
The lilac noose was hung
As from the gallows-tree
The rope, that held him, swung.

And, when their glances met,
Upon her lip and eye
He saw a radiant smile,
And said — “ Now let me die.”

And when the trap was sprung
The princess dipped her head;
But when they came to raise her,
They found her spirit fled;

And, 'twixt those corpses twain,
They saw a falcon bear
Aloft, with clenched talons,
A white dove through the air.



To Fitz Greene Halleck.

The Poet's Acre.

DOWN the mountain as I wandered,
And upon the landscape pondered,
Where, as in a net,
Lordly hedge and stately railing
With the farmer's wooden paling
Intersecting met,

Compassing the field of azure
Of the lake no rigid measure
Mapped unequally,
I bethought me, "Such division
Of the plain is a derision ;"
When my roving eye

Rested on the sexton's barrow
Shrinking near the portal narrow
 Of the churchyard green,
Where fill prince and peasant places
Equal as the chessboard's spaces,
 Hold they pawn or queen.

Still the zig-zag path descending,
Came I to a painter blending,
 On a tinier scale,
Under April's sunshine merry,
Meadow, lake and cemetery
 Sparkling in the vale.

And, with passionate expansion,
Free from envy, I the mansion
 And the cot surveyed,
Coveting nor manor pleasant
Nor the patches which the peasant
 Vexed with hoe and spade.

Happy, though without an acre,
While supplies the paper-maker
Sod like this fair page
Into which, at Fancy's hours,
I transplant the wayside flowers
Of my pilgrimage.



To Alfred Tennyson.

A CURATE, in a lonely hamlet preaching,
Nor heard beyond
Until with rumors of his saintly teaching
Echoes respond,
And then into a broader field translated
With ampler fold,
As soldiers are to higher grades elated
For actions bold —
Cries, when he hears assembled hundreds voicing
Responsive prayer,
Hosanna ! in yet bolder strains rejoicing
The distant air.

Sò thou, in humbler days, didst hymn a wailing
For Claribel,
Which on the outer world like unavailing
Entreaty fell ;
But friends around thee shared thy tuneful weeping,
And treasured long
The memory of that hapless maiden sleeping
Within thy song.
I see thee now in Art's great Temple throning,
A Hierophant,
And hear glad voices from far peaks entoning
Thy larger chaunt.



To Charles O'Conor.

Epimenides.

I.

YON hamlet, 'twixt the river-bank
And swelling slopes that grow to hills,
Now rings with iron clang and clank ;
The restless voice of labor thrills
Its peace. On Autumn's early snow,
The wayward cinder-woven wreaths
The wind's wild flickering currents show.
The fevered forge forever breathes
From yon tall chimneys grim and stark,
Whose dial-shadows, earthward thrown,
The sun can never see, nor mark
Their mystic march betray his own.

There, though now 'tis sad November,
Of my spring-time, I remember
How the chimes, at early morn,
Sang, "Another day is born."

"Lasses, quick! your kirtles don,
Kneeling, ask His benison;
Up, lads, up! The day hath broke,
Waits the patient steer his yoke!"

From the housewife's tidy table
Strode the ploughman to the stable,
Stalked the sower to the field,
Casting broad for Autumn's yield.

Oh! those ancient days were fair,
Heralded by chime and prayer;
God, in sky, field, wold and air,
Light and fragrance everywhere,

When the sun, his heavenly dome,
Like some saintly pilgrim, clomb
Till, in the mid-zenith blue,
Resting, half his labor through,
Shone he, poised on golden wings
As the lark his matin sings;
Noon, from the old village spire,
Rang, as rings the tinkling quire,
When the mystic Elevation
Thrills the kneeling congregation;
From that bright aerial dwelling
Every clang to glory welling,
Glory, full of grace to all,
In the field and in the hall,
Full of peace, and full of grace!
Unto all in every place!

I forbear the urchin's horn,
Requiem of the day half-worn.
“*Ite missa est.*” God's rest
Attend ye all, for all are blest.

I forbear the vesper song,
Doubly sweet, when all day long
One has bravely paid the vow,
“Thou shalt live by sweat of brow,”

And the dance upon the green,
Circling round fair May's new Queen,
Rustic sighs and rustic bliss,
Freshly-wedded happiness.

Faded now the spring's dear flowers,
Faded, too, those spring-tide hours !
Sweet as childhood's sleep the times
When I heard those village chimes !

II.

See ! the noon's consummate fire
Glow's above a city's spire,
Noon, that warmed the field and fell,
Burns o'er street and citadel !

But no chime from belfry holy
Calls to prayer the high and lowly ;
And no herdsman's mellow note
Preaches peace to tower and cot ;

But, like fierce alarms of fire,
Labor peals her tocsin dire,
And, from factory-prisons tall,
Tramp, as to a funeral,

Women, sad with trailing paces,
Children, wan with joyless faces,
Men, with toiling grim and chill,
Shivering at the whistle shrill.

Cheerless noontide ! whilom blest,
With thy boon of shade and rest,
Bailiff now of want and fear,
In gray garrets, where men hear

Imperious scream,
The strident steam,
Whoop ! whoop ! whoop ! whoop !
No play to-day !
Away ! obey !
March ye to the workshop dreary,
Well or ailing, fresh or weary.

III.

In yon forest green,
Where the hunt was seen,
Following the hound
O'er the scented ground
Or the Falcon's flight
At the Heron white,
Horns no more awake
Echoes in the brake.
Startled, the timid trees
Shake with the rushing breeze,

When speeds the dragon by,

Yelling his warning cry :

“Tramp ! tramp ! on, on, away,

Tramp ! tramp ! by night and day,

Throb ! throb ! black heart ! burn, burn !

Fill ! fill ! thy funeral urn !

Fly all ! my soul is fire !

Fly all ! my wrath is death !

My speed's intense desire

Makes lightnings of my breath !”

Dread Genie of that mystic Lamp,

Through centuries by sages trimmed

In turret lone and cavern damp,

Earth's vestal light of thought undimmed !

Lamp, fed by many a martyr's life,

How purple tyrants from thy flame

Have fallen, shrivelled in their strife

With angry wings to quench its gleam.

Dread Genie ! to that Lamp subdued,
Whether, on earth, the captive train,
Or wingéd ark, through tempest rude,
Thou waftest swiftly o'er the main,

Or, like old Rhætus chained below
The Cyclop's forge, thy struggles speed
The patient lathe, the hammer's blow,
And all the wheels of labor feed :

Man's slave ! and yet with wary eye
He watcheth thee as, in his cage,
The master's magnet, holds in sway
The desert-king's electric rage.

Man's creature ! yet his tyrant too !
Relentless iron Frankenstein !
How hard the doom that bids him woo—
And win those furnace-lips of thine !

No compact, on enchanted ground,
In midnight glen blood-sealed and signed,
With closer chains the soul e'er bound
Than thine, dread rival of the Wind!

For this, at least, the fiend of old,
In ransom, to his vassals gave
The flush of wine, the blaze of gold;
They reeled in rapture to the grave!

But thou, insatiate! cloud and gloom,
The fast, the vigil, and the scorn
Of careless crowds, prepare the tomb
Of sages in thy service worn;

Nor though a thousand pæans rise
Above their wasting dust — to me,
Shall summer thoughts and summer skies
Seem wisely lost, for fame and thee.

To me, the mossy bank that charms,
With flowers, the mirror floating by,
And priestly elms, that bend their arms
In benediction, where I lie,

These still remain. My heart can find
Far off, but not too far from men,
Some still retreat for heart and mind,
Some wind-swept silence of a glen.

There, when the gales exultant rush
From cloud-capped peaks to genial plains,
Each murmuring tree, each whispering bush,
Shall wake to soft Eolian strains.

To them my gorge shall still be free ;
But thou, mailed champion of the plain !
My panoply of rock, shall see
Thy fiery charge, renewed in vain !

There, pausing on the soft descent
Of slopes where rest the pine and birch,
The shepherd's hut and hunter's tent
Shall nestle near the Alpine church ;

Whose housewife bell, when day is gone,
With silver metes the pall of night,
And, when the stars have left their throne,
Marks day's brocade with measure bright.

And when the goatherd's children stray
Down the long hill to my lone nook,
Their shouts shall win me to their play,
To wander with them by the brook ;

There shall our hands the osier weave,
And plait the flowers in garlands bright,
With talk and laugh, till fostering eve
Recalls them to their cottage height.

When frost and winter drive the herds
To towns, where men and herds are sold,
They'll leave me with the winter birds,
Star-watched, within my sacred fold ;

And when the yule-log lights the hearth,
The peasant groups shall chat of me,
And kindly wish me with the mirth
Around their humble Christmas-tree.

And one shall whisper to his friend
New marvels of the mystic glen,
And grieve for me self-doomed to end
My graybeard days afar from men.

To S. T. Wallis.

Waking Dream.

WESTWARD, looking thro' my window, Venus shone ;
Lit the room where I had all night dreamed alone ;
Woke her lustrous eye the slumbering depths of
mine,

Kindling sparks among the ashes of lang-syne.
Vainly strove the dawn's first glories through the
gloom :

Like my heart, the lonely chamber seemed a tomb
Where sweet ghosts, in sad procession, seemed to
flow

Past my bed, become a bier, and there bestow
Grief's last kiss upon my brow.—Each tender glance
Thrilled my soul with joy and pain ; as in a trance
Shrank within my palsied lips all utterance.

Fading in the dawn the Morn-Star disappears,
And dispels the tender throng, but not my tears ;
For I wake with sorrowing heart and aching head,
Wake to find sweet Venus vanished and Love dead.



To Eliza H. Ward.

Orchard Fantasia.

BEHOLD yon hale old apple-tree,

In its wrinkled skin with mosses bound,
Yield to the south wind's sportive glee
The blossoms it scatters recklessly,
Like snowflakes, over the ground.

Like snow, in a night they will disappear,
Absorbed by the yearning earth ;
But the fruits it hath borne for many a year,
The joy of urchins far and near,
That tree shall again bring forth.

And as those blossoms sown by the wind
 Leave teeming germs on the bounteous tree,
So gentle words and charities kind,
Though man prove thankless, leave behind
 Sweet germs for the hoards of memory.

* * * * *

And when deathward sighs the bosom heaves,
 Though the kindly deeds we have done on earth
Should seem to us but as withered leaves,
While our sins, like serpents, in living sheaves
 Daunt the soul on the verge of its second birth;

The blossoms shall flower in Heaven again,
 Where no wild breeze shall waft them away ;
And the clang of the blow that breaks our chain
Shall drive the emblems of sin and pain,
 The serpents, back to their dens of clay.

Give me Joy.

WHEN age its wrinkles and its snows
Had laid on Talma's cheek and brow,
'Tis said he made the mournful vow,
"No friend shall see my eyes unclose."
For every form he looked upon
Revealed a ghastly skeleton !
This earth was bright when first, a toy,
Life in my youthful hands was placed,
But now its waters have no taste—
Bring me the wine-cup ! Give me joy !

Like Talma, in the Present dim
And Future dark, I see abound,
In silvery age and youth just crowned
With beauty's wreath, but spectres grim.

E'en Fortune's ingots lost and won
Are watched by Care, the skeleton;
Nay, power, wealth and pleasure cloy,
'Tis all the same sad change of tone
From smile to tear, from laugh to groan.

. Bring me the wine-cup! Give me joy!

Though youth has fled, affections still
With steady glow my heart may cheer:
Come hither, wife and children dear!
Come, ere the cup again I fill,
Come, ere each loved shape looked upon
Shall seem to hide a skeleton.

What! was thy smile but a decoy?

And ye to whom I've given breath!

Do ye already wait my death?

Quick! quick! The wine-cup! Give me joy!

Begone, ye vipers whom I've nursed,
And cherished with my heart's best blood;
Beldame, avaunt! with all thy brood
And be ye all like me accurst!

Thank Heaven, thy witching beauty's gone

And leaves thee but a skeleton!

Come, friend beloved! Thou since a boy

My more than brother! Thou'lt not fail!

Away, thou death's-head grim and pale!

Fill, fill the wine-cup! Give me joy!

Thou'st changed the wine! my throat it burns,

'Tis bitter as ingratitude!

What! say'st thou from the grape 't was brewed?

Within my lips to gall it turns!

Bring me the glass! O Death! thou'st won!

I see myself a skeleton!

And that weird shape was once a boy,

To whom each scene below shone fair?

God! How its eyeless sockets stare!

Is there no cup will give me joy?

No! not the bowl! The chalice bring,

Exhaustless with the Paschal blood

That purified sin's sable flood,

And still flows from Thee! thorn-crowned King!

In whom mine eyes behold alone
A Saviour, not a skeleton !
Oh ! touch the hearts of wife and boy,
And friend, with quickening grace divine.
Thou wilt ! Then let me life resign,
Sipping Thy last cup's heavenly joy !



To Leonard Woods.



Ziska.

WHEN first my infant eyes took in the glory
Of this fair earth,

Ere on them fell the shadow of the story
Of mortal birth,

The blessed light above seemed but one fusion
Of many a sun,

And, closing, they imprisoned the illusion
That Heaven was won.

When I looked forth again, God's bright creation
Revealed its forms

Beneath the orb which every constellation
 Illumes and warms.

I then discovered 'mid the heavenly spaces
 Vast depths of blue,
And on the earth the landscape's myriad
 graces,
 Of varied hue.

Unconscious that, as cleared the golden vision,
 It darker grew,
I revelled in green fields and groves Elysian
 With joy all new.
The sun a dictionary seemed for reading
 Nature's great book,
O'er which I pored wherever fancy, leading,
 My footsteps took.

Oh ! then, Aladdin-like, I gathered treasures
 On golden stems ;
First fruits and flowers, then clutched at empty
 pleasures,
 As precious gems.

But soon these luresome objects lost their shimmer,
As in a ball,
When waxlights wane, the waltzer's eyes flit dimmer
Around the hall.

To childhood's lively joys, succeeded sorrows
Poignant and stern,
As he who silver from a miser borrows
Gold must return.
For manhood hath no sportive recreations
Like schoolboy plays ;
No anguish keener than when, in vacations,
Come rainy days.

And soon my soul began its second training,
With new-born zest ;
I thought to spend one half of life explaining
What meant the rest :
And found the problem solved and the equation,
Like some tall peak
Attained, which reaches but the adumbration
Of what you seek.

And when, with every sense alive to Nature,
By day and night,
Familiarly I knew her every feature
Shaded and bright ;
With adolescence came an empty craving
For the unknown ;
As thinks the spendthrift butterfly of saving
When summer 's gone.

And then, the sad reflection realizing —
How brief is life —
Behold the soul against the senses rising
In bitter strife.
Existence, like the fleeting year, had seasons,
And, in the end —
I could not through its gloom divine the reasons —
Must graveward tend.

Through misty tears, a God-like face and lowly
In rainbows beamed,
Around Whose bleeding brow a radiance holy,
Upshooting, gleamed.

But though, toward earth, big drops of blood, still
rolling,

Did lingering fall,
He said with tender voice, His pain controlling,
“I died for all.”

Since from His bow-shaped lips, like golden arrows

Those words did speed,
No more my heart an endless craving harrows
With hunger's need.

Already, when I lift my eyes to heaven,

I see but light,
And scenes once fair below, from morn to even,
Are dark as night.



To Julia Ward Howe.



Metempsychosis.

THE God, the Hero, and the Sage,
Nor sceptre, sword, nor myrtle crown,
Nor e'en a drop have handed down
Of bubbling blood to this our age.

Caught in the marble or the brass,
They smile or frown their joy or grief,
From statue, coin or bas-relief,
Which, though in fashion they surpass

The chiselled thoughts of modern days,
Bring to our eyes but traits of men,
Who, like ourselves, on earth have been
The shrines of Life's ephemeral blaze.

But deeds and words embalmed in song,
In after ages—like the seed
From royal mummies drawn to feed
The tribes which Egypt's river throng—

Dilate fresh hearts and sublimate
The lowliest blood with flames heroic,
And fortify with valor stoic
The weak against the storms of fate.

Yes! as the shivered chord's complaint
Floats onward through the murmuring air,
Until some unison as fair
Responds unto its whisper faint,

So, when it severs earth's last thread,
The soul pursues its journeying,
And swells, on fleet and tireless wing,
The shadowy army of the dead ;

Until it chance a kindred chord,
Within some brother's sleeping heart,
To wake, and its own life impart,
To sage's lips or warrior's sword.

Napoleon fought with Cæsar's blade,
Dante was god-like Homer's son,
Timoleon prompted Washington,
And Paul stout Luther's fierce crusade.

Nor in such mighty souls alone
Do kindred spirits breathe their fire ;
The humblest heart's untutored lyre
From shadowy voices takes its tone.

Until they sound, bend every string
Thy hand can grasp, with zealous care !
Though from thy lyre but hoarse despair,
Fate's ruthless sweep at first should wring.

Strain on ! until thy spirit's Sire
Awake that chord of happier fate
Whose jubilance shall modulate
Thy woe to joy's celestial quire.



To my Daughter, Mrs. Margaret Astor Chanler.

The Wise Maiden.

MASTER.

PRITHEE, why forever sweeping,
Maiden, this poor room ?
Ever stirring, never sleeping,
Seems thy restless broom.

Prithee, why forever praying,
Those pure lips within ? —
Art, I fear, too dearly paying
For but fancied sin.

MAID.

Though I'm ever sweeping, master,
Did my zeal grow slack,
Than it disappeareth faster
Would the dust come back ;

And my praying is but sweeping
This poor sinful breast,
Into which fresh dust is creeping,
When from prayer I rest.

MASTER.

Never does my eye remember,
Maiden, to have seen,
When thy care hath swept my chamber,
Speck of dust within.

MAID.

May the angel on my sweeping
Praise like this impart,
Who, his master's mansions keeping,
Comes to search my heart.



To Edward Cunard.

The Old Rope.

“FATHER! what is this old rope?”

Boy! 'T was once our vessel's hope

When the billows rose in rage her decks to whelm.
In that wild September gale,
Which had rent our every sail,
With that bit of rope I lashed down her helm.

Had its strands then given way,

We had been the fishes' prey,

And their banquet in the sea's deep caves,
But I never lost my grip
Of that rope which held the ship
Till the winds had made peace with the waves.

How the mariner exults,
When he feels the throbbing pulse
Of the ocean lashed to fever by the gale,
And his hand directs the course
Of his vessel, like a horse
Madly tearing over hill and over dale.

Ah! the boldest charioteer
Were beside himself with fear,
If a steed in his teeth the bit should take,
Not on solid hill or plain,
But across the slippery main,
Where your path writhes beneath you like a snake.

There be those that gather nests
Down the Orkneys' sea-girt crests,
Who are lowered by a rope like this,
And who, when their srips are full,
Give the signal-cords a pull,
To be hoisted up out of the abyss.

Yet the boldest ne'er dissemble

How much now and then they tremble,

When they feel their lives hang on such a bight,

Though those fowlers, when they climb,

Risk but one life at a time,

While this rope held a score of us that night.

But no feeble hand of man

Thus from parting kept its span,

And our vessel from the trough of the sea;

It was God who held it there,

For I breathed a breath of prayer,

Like the fishers on the Lake of Galilee.

When I'm summoned by the Lord,

Round my coffin let this cord

Drop me like a fowler seeking for a nest;

And another boon I crave

Is that by me, in the grave,

This trusty old friend of mine shall rest.

Dare an unbeliever say

That, on Resurrection day,

It may not serve to raise me from the grave?

Like the fowler with his scrip,

Or our storm-imperilled ship,

Which its strands from destruction helped to save?



The Two Mirrors.

A SKIPPING urchin, gay and fair,
With eyes like sapphires beaming,
Pranced up my path, his flaxen hair
In tangled ringlets streaming ;
And, in his dimpled grace,
Dull memory sought to trace
An image of the face
That shone with kindred joy
When I too was a boy ;
But Time held off the glass so far,
I only saw the Evening Star,
And, by its twinkling glimmer, read
On my own face, as on a stone
With moss and grave-grass overgrown,
The legend — “Here thy youth lies dead.”

The boy danced by, and I o’ertook
A graybeard’s footsteps trembling;
His palsied hand and vacant look
No ills of age dissembling.
Beyond! a churchyard drear—
’Neath skies that dropped a tear
Upon a freighted bier—
Said to my saddened eye,
“Soon, thou too, here shalt lie;”
For Time now held the glass so near
That I could share the miser’s fear,
Who thinks how soon his grated door
Must yield its silver plate, to score
His name upon the confined cell
Where Rich and Poor at last must dwell.



The Hebrew Alphabet.

COME, my little Hebrew lad,
On thy task look not so sad.
Only learn it, and thou'lt feel
Writing is in prayer to kneel;
Writing, in His sacred tongue,
Words His holy prophets sung;
Writing out the Law bequeathed
Unto Moses, when He breathed,
Near the burning bush, the Word
Then as now, "I am the Lord."
First we'll learn to spell the name
Sinai heard in clouds and flame.
Write the *Aleph*—every sign
Let thy pen with love design.

Aleph is bright Eden's token,
Ere our race by sin was broken.
Daleth follows in the spell
Loved in Heaven, feared in Hell.
Aleph, *Daleth*, then again
Aleph taketh up the train.
Aleph, *Daleth*, *Aleph* now
On our bended knees we bow,
Ere unto the Holy Rune
We append the closing *Nun*.
Adon Adon, clap your hands
Hills ! while joy elates the lands ;
Aleph add, and, with a *Yod*,
Tremble at the name of God !
God with whom none others vie,
God of Israel ! ADONAI.

The Old Teacher.

TIMOR DOMINI INCIPIUM SAPIENTIAE.

ENCOUNTERING last week upon the street

A gray and year-bent man,

Whose eye lit up, with salutation sweet,

His features pinched and wan —

“Your pardon, sir,”—said I,—“Where have we met?”

Then he — “’T was I taught you your alphabet.”

I pressed his trembling hand and took him home;

Infirm he was and poor,

Threadbare his coat as some black-letter tome

Marked “sixpence,” in a store.

A worn epitome of weary strife

With cares that cloud too oft a blameless life.

For years on thankless labor's treadmill spent —

Each one the former's twin —

His only prop in age's steep descent

Was now a pension thin.

Nor could the wealth of Harpagon but gild,

Not sweeten, his poor cup with sorrows filled.

His wife, long gathered to the tomb, had left

A helpless family ;

My fancy pictured him, of her bereft,

With their poor children three,

Whose names he scarcely knew, till then engrossed

In teaching syntax to his boyish host.

The eldest son "went early to the bad" —

The second to the sea,

And with his daughter and her children sad

He shared his penury ;

His pittance eked an ailing husband's gains,

His mind's full coffers stored their children's brains.

The Lapp consumes his endless summer day
 In gathering a store
Of food, against the long and sable sway
 Of winter's icy war.
But each day for that stricken household drear,
Was, though in miniature, an Arctic year.

A cup of water may the pilgrim bless,
 Though on his way to die
Near that lone tomb, within the wilderness,
 Where his forefathers lie ;
And on the old man's heart, with tender zeal,
I poured the balm that soothes, but cannot heal.

Nay, more—ere many days, my memory traced
 Some ancient schoolmates, still
Within this vale of tears, whose youth had graced
 His Greek and Latin drill.
The poorer ones each gave a cheerful mite ;
The richer mostly but a shrug polite.

'Tis not my slender kindness to display,
By unthrift far too scant,
Nor to inspire your pity, prompts this lay,
Oft sung in nobler chaunt.
Distress abounds ; but this exemplar taught
A lesson with a solemn meaning fraught.

It set me pondering how through childhood's vales,
Our steps are swayed by fear ;
We dread the nursery's hobgoblin tales,
A father's glance severe ;
Until the climax of dismay we own
Before the schoolmaster upon his throne.

How changed our lots to-day ! His for the worse —
Mine by no misery bent —
Smaller than his my share of Adam's curse,
Greater my discontent.
I felt rebuked, to see so meek and pale
Him at whose frown my boyhood used to quail !

Whose rod was for my good. From its controul
 Since years have set me free,
No dread of the old master keeps my soul
 Bowed in humility,
As erst, till he released us for the day
To sports and games beyond his ferule's sway.

But now, where'er we roam, at task or play,
 A sterner Master's eye
And keener rod direct our every way
 And action, from on High.
Nor court our eyes the nod, that shall dismiss
Our souls to endless woe or endless bliss.

The Cryst.

AN hour too early in the grove !

An hour for blissful dreams,
Which countless starry eyes above
Will gladden with their beams.

Through leaves and twigs they peep at me,
Like frolic elves at play,
Who slip behind rock, bush or tree,
Whene'er one looks their way.

The varying screen through which I gaze
Fantastic shapes assumes,
As with its breath the south wind sways
The tree-tops' yielding plumes ;

Till rests my wandering glance upon
The steadfast star of Jove,
As lovers' eyes all others shun
Save those that drink their love.

I hearken to the village chime ;
The first half hour is past !
With what a funeral march cold Time
Sets forth upon the last !

A dark cloud, sailing by, puts out
My lone star's radiant light ;
Its shadow dims with sombre doubt
Fond hopes but now so bright.

Anon, upon the thirsty leaves
The pattering rain-drops fall,
The sky its swelling bosom heaves
And clouds each other call.

In place of heaven's fair face, alive
With kindly twinkling eyes,
Remote volcanoes seem to rive
The cloud-peaks of the skies,

Up-flaring, like the beacon's flame,
Which darts from crag to brow
On Alpine summits, and the gleam
Of arms reveals below.

The zephyr which, with fond caress,
The prostrate leaves just stirred,
Until methought her rustling dress
And fairy foot I heard,

Like a startled hind, now holds its breath,
As the north wind's eager pant
With a hiss, as of serpents bristling its path,
Comes driving the rain aslant ;

Swaying the saplings of the wood
And its giants of stalwart form,
Who toss their arms, like a multitude
Applauding the voice of the storm.

Soon, from the battlements of night,
Fierce lightning shafts are hurled,
Like meteors pre-Adamite
In the old chaotic world.

A roar, as of a smitten shield,
Responds to those red brands,
As when Salmoneus scorned to yield
To Jove's divine commands.

A roar as of caissons over a vault—
Each armed with a loaded gun—
Which, on its summit a moment halt,
Then topple down one by one.

They are fired ! first singly, and then pell-mell,
And the startled air is riven
By thunder crashes like echoes from Hell
Of its fiends besieging Heaven !

Appalled, I clasp in pallid dismay
The tryst-tree in the glade,
While gods and Titans in frantic affray
Ply round me their cannonade.

When lo ! in the midst of that riot fell,
Through its bolts of deadly fire,
The silvery voice of the midnight bell,
Speaks from the village spire,

As waved by a spell, the battle turns ;
Its wild alarums cease ;
The moon again in the zenith burns ;
All nature is at peace.

At chime the twelfth, my whispered name,—

And then—an angel's kiss!

Would I renew that fearful dream

For the wealth of that waking bliss?



To Eustace W Barron.

Palmistry.

“MAIDENS ! Bonnie maidens three,
Stop a while and list to me,
By the hedge, beneath the tree !

“Let me read each mystic line,
Fate’s or Fortune’s future sign,
In those tender palms of thine.”

Spake the first, whose thoughtful eyes
Took their hue from azure skies,
“Much I dread thy prophecies.”

And the next, with hair of gold,
“I have had my fortune told,
Yet comes not the lover bold.”

But the third, with lips compressed,
“I will try thee, if the rest —
Nay, alone — Here, read thy best.”

Then the crone with swarthy cheek,
Eyes ablaze but manner meek,
Spoke, as though the hand could speak :

“Power wantest thou and gold —
Both shalt have when thou art old,
Joyless riches then shalt hold ;

“Here I see two broken hearts,
Neither thine !” The maiden starts —
“Loose my hand ! I spurn your arts.”

“Go thy way ! The Gipsy scorn —
Roses now thy cheek adorn
Which may fade before the morn.”

Now she of the auburn tress,
In her “steel-eyed loveliness,” *
Ventures near the sorceress,

Who, untouched the silver alm
Lying in the proffered palm,
Curious heeds that gaze so calm.

As the jewel which, at night,
Still retains day’s vanished light,
Shone the Gipsy’s vision bright.

Like that jewel’s rugged trace
On the crystal’s polished face,
In that eye she read disgrace.

* Washington Allston.

And a cold and glistening ray
Flashed, ere turned her glance away,
On the silver as it lay.

“Since my sister Sibylline
Read to thee its hidden sign,
Pressed hath been this hand of thine.

“Many a tear and many a groan
Hast thou shed and breathed alone ;
The *lover bold* hath come and gone.”

Waved her hand with haughty grace,
Burned like sunset's glow her face,
As the maid stepped back a pace.

“Dare not wrong my spotless fame !
Lo ! this ring protects from shame
Love I may not yet proclaim !

“Though but lowly my degree,
Yet a noble proud and free
Plighted truly is to me.”

In those eyes the tears that shone
Seemed to soothe the ruthless crone,
Seemed to touch her heart of stone.

“Ah ! I see. Its bitter foes,
Pride and rank, the love oppose
Which upon thy cheek now glows.”

“If a knight my lover be,
Soon his gallant form I’ll see ;
If a caitiff ! He is free.”

Then the maid with eyes of blue,
Clasping her companion, threw
One hand to the Gipsy’s view.

As that gentle palm she grasped,
On its lines the weird one cast
Eyes in which tears gathered fast.

Bright as pearls a diver bold
Brings up from the sea-deeps cold,
From her lids' dark eaves they rolled.

"Dearer is the hand I hold
Than the mine's discovered gold,
Than the hoarder's wealth untold;

"Lines of hope and lines of truth,
Lines of pure and peerless youth,"
Sobbed the crone with joy uncouth.

Scarce these words exultant said,
When a glittering cavalcade
Fills the path adown the glade.

Knights in gorgeous bravery,
Steeds that neigh a proud reply
To the horn's wild hallali !

When their chief in armor bright
Met the steel-eyed damsel's sight,
Crimson blushed her cheek so white ;

Faded, then, like evening's sun
From the snow when day is done.
“Lo ! here comes my champion !

“Still ! oh, fluttering heart, thy fears !
Though a monarch he appears,
And a royal morion wears ;

“On, beneath its golden gleams,
Tenderly as ever beams
All the glory of my dreams.”

Then the King, with joy and pride,
Sprang down to the maiden's side,
"Mother ! rise and bless my bride."

At his spur's impatient clank,
At his voice so glad and frank,
Rose the Gipsy from the bank.

Vanished then her dreamy mood,
Downward shrank the cloak and hood,
And a queen revealed she stood.

Then advanced with face of pride,
Blessed her son and blessed the bride
Nestling speechless at his side.

Motionless the blue-eyed maid,
As to break the spell afraid,
Stood beneath the elm-tree's shade ;

Till the queen, with courtly phrase,
“Prithee, sweet, thine eyelids raise,
Lovely art thou beyond praise.”

From long lashes glancing under,
Starts the blue-eyed girl in wonder,
Like a child at sound of thunder ;

Starts with cheek of scarlet hue ;
For the page in doublet blue
Timidly who near her drew,

Was the same, she now bethought her,
Who once, offering holy water,
With a wishful look did court her ;

Once, too, passing from the church
In procession through the porch,
Lit her taper with his torch.

From her eyes, in blissful maze,
Timidly responsive rays
Meet his fond and sparkling gaze.

Soon the joyous cavalcade,
Bearing Gipsy, bride and maid,
Homeward prance adown the glade.

* * * *

Seething spite in every vein,
Chose the proud lass to remain,
Envyng her companions twain.

To William G. Ward.

Minstrelsy.

IN the weary tramp of life,
Midst its din of clanging strife,
They who foot it in the ranks
Fill their duty without thanks.

They want water, and not rhyme,
Food, when up is marching-time,
Sleep, when, supper over, they
Weary heads on knapsacks lay.

Yet, when comes an eve of leisure,
Oh ! how eager they for pleasure ;
“Pass the goblet—fill the bowl—
Drink we to the better soul.”

Ear and heart then crave a song,
All intent the listeners throng ;
Crave no Bacchic roundelays,
But the chaunts of boyhood's days.

Sings the minstrel strains of war ?
Eyelids quiver, glasses jar.
Tunes his viol hymns of love ?
Moistened cheeks their magic prove.

Glancing one upon his glass,
Mirrored sees the blue-eyed lass
Gifted first with power to thrill
His young heart that knew no ill.

And another, in the wine,
Imaged sees the face divine,
Which when loved and wooed and won,
Vanished, like the setting sun !

And another, as he sips
The nectar eager for his lips,
Meets in fancy the caress
Which those lips shall never press!

Thus all, in a dreamy fever,
Would the song might last forever;
Sighing when the magic strain
Drops them back to life again.

But to-morrow! "Shoulder pack,"
Farewell to the bivouac,
Onward march with drum and fife,
Footsore up the path of life.

So the Poet would he win
Sympathies the heart within,
Must not urge his song, but wait
For the clamor at the gate!

To Alexander H. Sibley.



Porrigo Dextram.

WHILE sorrows ebb and flow
On Life's gray strand,
To all oppressed by woe
I reach a hand.

The body's but a cell,
Its jailer he
Who soon from earth's dark spell
Shall set us free.

Stars, though unseen by day,
 Still glow in wells,
 Where truth's unwelcome ray
 In exile dwells.

Like barks, wave-tossed till sore,
 Upon the deep,
 Within our souls, a store
 Of wealth we keep.

Then, brother, here 's my hand,
 Though void its palm,
 Beside thee will I stand
 Till God send balm;

Beside thee float, while hold
 Two planks together,
 Till melts His sun this cold
 And wintry weather.

When that ray shines, we part,
But thou shalt stay ;
Another sinking heart
Calls me away.

And should hope's dawning beams
To gems congeal,
Bright as the diamond streams
Of Maund reveal,

Swear that a brother's cry,
By sea or land,
Shall ever draw thee nigh
With helping hand.

Not Wine Alone.

'Tis not within the vine-wreathed bowl
Alone, that madness lies.

Whatever quickens pulse and soul,
Beyond sage reason's mild control,
With wine's sweet phrenzy vies.

The Boy, when first his arrow shakes
Within the circle's eye ;
The Youth, whose javelin overtakes
The roe-buck bounding to the brakes,
Is drunk with extacy.

The Rider, when his steed hath past
Some rival cavalcade ;

And he, whose bark and wind-bent mast
On adverse sails their shadows cast,
In sport or cannonade ;

The brain that yields to starry eyes,
Or fires with clash of steel ;
Or swims when victory's shouts arise
From blood-stained fields to evening skies,
All these with madness reel.

The Bard, whose fervid strains arouse
Ten thousand echoes, when
A nation's gratitude endows
With laurel, or with oak, the brows
Of King or Citizen ;

The Conqueror, with sheathéd sword,
Midst Io Pæans borne,

The Tribune, whose electric word,
Upon the forum's billows poured,
Awakens wrath or scorn,

These, all are drunk with conscious power,
And they, the fierce or cold,
Who revel in revenge's hour,
Or who exult when gloating o'er
Red piles of hidden gold.

Yet, when I glow with gladdening wine,
All, all these various joys are mine,
At Fancy's will.
Love, beauty, fame, rank, wealth, and power,
Alternate, in the jocund hour
My bosom fill.

Again a boy, I clutch the prize,
A youth, I bask in sunny eyes,

The race I win ;
My bark all other barks outstrips,
My name is, by a nation's lips,
Made Glory's twin.

'Tis o'er ! I find 't was but a dream —
But, through the fore-dawn's dark extreme,
Day's earliest dart
Reminds me that, in Love or War,
Such triumphs leave no other scar
Than in my heart.



To Anthony L. Robertson.

The Ruby Goblet.

COMRADES ! we have sung and laughed
Merrily to-night ;
Each of us a cup hath quaffed
To his mistress bright.
Do not let a sadder strain
Take you by surprise ;
Ere the toast we fill again
I would moralize.

Blazoned in our firmament
Float the poiséd hours,
From their task, like us, unbent,
Garlanded with flowers.

In this polished table's face
 See the wax-lights gleam,
As the early sunbeams chase
 Darkness from a stream.

Say, is not this empty glass
 Some poor spirit's jail ?
Else, when I my finger pass
 Round it, why this wail ?
Now, a maiden's plaintive sigh,
 Now, a captive's groan,
Now, a stricken warrior's cry
 Seems its swelling tone.

These dim arabesques you see
 Gild its ruddy bowl,
Are the faded tracery
 Of a magic scroll.
Mine the wizard's mystic lore
 To divine the spell,
And evoke those shapes of yore
 From the crystal cell !

Hist ! An echo now replies
Faintly to my hymn ;
Lo ! A ghost with pale blue eyes
Rises to the brim.
Wistful is his visage cold,
Trimmed his beard with grace,
As we see in many an old
Pictured knightly face.

To my ear those lips so pale,
In his native tongue,
Whisper now a sadder tale
Than our lips have sung.
'Tis a century at least
Since Venetian mould
Fashioned for his bridal feast,
This red cup I hold.

Day had only broken thrice
Ere the Adriatic,
Of his young heart's Paradise,
Quenched the bliss extatic.

Ransomed came from Tunis' strand
One long mourned as dead,
By whose madly jealous hand
His fair life was sped.

Though she wept and tore her hair
On her darling's bier,
Fugitive was her despair
As the fleeting year.
Hardly was the crimson dried
On the fatal knife,
Ere became the victim's bride
The destroyer's wife.

From this chalice, which her lips
Drained his bridal night,
He, in spirit hovering, sips
Still a sad delight.
Hark! the spectre chants a lay
Of the olden time—
Listen, while my lips essay
To repeat the rhyme.

All the friends who round my bridal board
Joyous shone,
Are, like me, beneath the tufted sward,
Dead and gone.

Oft has this beloved goblet rung
Life's first dawn ;
Often wailed the child whose birth it sung,
Dead and gone.

Warriors I have seen, and statesmen hoary,
Round it drawn ;
Seen eclipsed their wisdom and their glory,
Dead and gone.

Jovial guests ! how near your revelry,
Those lips yawn,
Which have swallowed myriads like me,
Dead and gone.

Comrades ! sadly sings the ghost
Of this ruby glass ;
Fill to him a silent toast —
Quick ! the flagon pass.
If so near the red lips yawn
Of the glutton grave,
Let us antedate the dawn
In this rosy wave !

Bohemian Song.

COME, trip it with me gaily here,
The forest glade our ball-room is,
The ills of life shall disappear,
Or from the turf rebound in bliss.

Blow, comrade, blow thy wheaten pipe,
Twang, brother, twang the trembling string;
Care gripes us with an iron gripe;—
To care the joyous heel we fling.

Their walls of stone but dungeons are,
To them who in great cities dwell,
'Neath roofs through which no sunbeam fair
Can reach the flowers we love so well.

For us, our last night's grassy bed
Kind nature makes up fresh again,
Ere drops the sun his weary head
Upon the bosom of the main.

In sleep, we hear the mystic powers
Of earth their subtle callings ply ;
Awake, in brighter worlds than ours,
We read the marvels of the sky.

Once more, sweet partner, pipe again,
Twang fiercer, mates, the cittern's call ;
For, unseen spirits swell the strain
To which our feet keep festival.

An atom less, and we should be
Floating on rosy clouds of love ;
A feather more, with pinions free,
Cleaving the paths of worlds above.

Thy drooping head my shoulder seeks,
Sweet partner of the wandering doom
Which poised 'twixt earth and heaven keeps
Us, like Mohammed's pensile tomb.

The evening star sinks fast, and see !
Around us in the twilight shades,
The mystic throngs of old Chaldee,
Her patriarchs, matrons, braves and maids.

Blow softly while the ghostly crew
The cadence mark with statelier pace ;
Are they so many—we so few ?
Oh, brothers, quick, one warm embrace !

They're gone ! 't is night ; at dusk they come,
Those shades of our long-buried sires,
To follow us where'er we roam ;
“Now, comrades ! to your evening fires.”

To Florence Howe.



Waltz.

COME to me, maiden fair,
Maiden with golden hair,
Now that the vesper air
Trembles no more with prayer!

Come, where the Zingaree,
Under the linden tree,
Spurring his comrades three,
Pipes a wild jubilee!

Come, while their tabor's beat
Urges the dancers fleet ;
Come, let thy tiny feet
Mine on the meadow meet !

Bounding we gaily start ;
Flashes thy blue eyes dart ;
Spare thou my captive heart ;
Or — let us never part !

Strains gently sighing in the air, love,
Wake echoes in our hearts so near, love !
I pant with thy sighs, love,
And see with thine eyes, love.
Swayed by the magic waltz, love,
Ne'er to its measure false, love,
One hand in thine, love,
One holds thee mine, love —
Mine, while fills the glade the whirling dance,

With visions bright
That dazzle sight ;
Mine, while float we clasped, as in a trance,
On pinions bright,
This sparkling night.

Rarest diamonds of the mine, love,
Pale beside those eyes of thine, love ;
But ere I thy hand resign,
Take, oh ! take this heart of mine.

Dying, sleeps in death the strain ;
Sinks my soul in gloom and pain.
Till that waltz shall wake again,
Thou and I, sweet girl, are twain.

Mazurka.

STAND aside while Schàmiloff,
In the hall of Pèterhof,
Drags the Queen of Beauty off,
Duchess Olga Ròmanoff,
Stèmming the dance's tide
With the mazurka stride
Which she so lately,
Grand Duchess stately,
Follows sedately.
Nòw with a victor's pride
Clasps he her slender waist,
Twin-like they onward glide,
As though by foemen chased
Now casts her loose, but holds,
Vice-like, her captive hand ;
While, like a tempest, rolls
Louder the frantic band.

He tramps with fiercer swing,
She his pace following
Lightly as bird on wing ;
Follows without demur
His clashing heel and spur ;
He proud as Lucifer,
She, as an angel calm
Trusting his iron arm
Through the wild dance's swarm,
Till the orchestral storm
Melts into melodies
Soft as a summer breeze.
Now other steps they choose,
He in his turn pursues
And her forgiveness woos,
With a beseeching joy,
Woos her retreating coy,
When, like a thunder-clap,
Halt ! bids the leader's rap,
And Duchess Olga sees
Schàmiloff on his knees.

To William E. Barron.

Contradanza.

To the ball of Peñalvèr
Draped in mùslin clouds, repair
All Havana's daughters fair.

Eyes like diamonds upon jèt
Sparkle to the castanet.
Cheeks of pearl in sable set

By their fràmes of raven hàir,
Saint-like crown the arches fair
Of young bosoms free from care.

Hark! the dânce is just beginnìng,
See the Ethiop faces grinnìng
On the ardent couples spinnìng!

Midst those fairy phantoms, waving
Perfumed scarves the sense enslaving,
There was one that set me raving.

Princess of the *Contradanza*,
In those glowing realms of Cancer,
Was Dolores ! whom my stanza

Cannot picture otherwise,
In her stainless beauty's guise,
Than a shape from Paradise.

When her glance shot back the ràys
Of my dèep imploring gaze,
I wound through the dance's maze,

Clove its billowy fall and rise,
Taking oàth by her flashing eyès
That her heart should become my prize.

When a mán with fiery breath
Whispered — “Rush not to your death,

If you dance this *seguidilla*
With Dolores, I will kill you ! ”

Though I saw but a swarthy beard,
When I turned as he disappeared,
Through my frame ran an icy shiver,
As of one fallen in a river,
Until she from her gleaming eyes
Shot a meteor of wild surprise,
And I read in her lips’ disdain,
“Are you deaf to this wooing strain ? ”

On I pressed till I reached her side,
Clasped her waist in its slender pride,
And inhaling her balmy breath,
In the whirl leaped from thoughts of death,
Like a spirit which from its tomb
Soars to Heaven the day of doom.
From the panting throng, that surged
Thick around us, we emerged
Gliding still near its throbbing edge,
In her ear trembled yet my pledge,

When, within the boscage, staring
I perceived two wild eyes glaring
Like the panther's before his spring —
To my troth she was murmuring
Words that filled my soul with riot,
Words that soothed my sad disquiet,
Till I saw a gleaming knife
Tap the fountains of her life !

Aimed at mé was the vengeful blów
That drew blood from her breast of snow.
When his error the maniac knew,
With the red blade himself he slew.
From her lips, upon Death's red tide
Floated — “MANUEL ! why kill thy bride ?”

The Blind Fiddler.

Who knocks ? Come in ! Thy message say ;
A beggar ? Sixpence — Go thy way !
A fiddler too ? A shilling take
And go ; nor dare my nerves to shake.
Thy little handmaid says thou'rt blind,
Each eye, a sixpence more. That's kind.
Two shillings not enough ? Ingrate !
Well ! let the little maiden prate.
“ Please, sir, his poor old viol's strung ;
For thanks he has no other tongue.”
A tear ? “ Its strings he fain would sweep,
Few thank when they a harvest reap.”
Well ! Play, old man.—That timid air
Steals through me like an infant-prayer.

Now swells the bow to fuller strains,
Exhaling riper joys and pains
Of youth and manhood,—old man, stay
Thy fingers ! picture not decay,
But Love, the Dance, the Festal Song,
The Squadron's Charge—the Altar's Throng.
Here, take my purse—my blessing too,
Thou'st shown me something yet to do ;

And when thou'rt gone, I'll hie me forth,
Convinced there still are joys on earth,
Though not the passions, pride and power,
Which wither in life's sunset-hour ;
But Nature's every charm and grace—
For, ages wrinkle not her face—
A steadfast Love, to Friendship kin
The victory of soul o'er sin ;
And charities, like cargoes sent
To distant climes, which tenfold rent
Bring back to hearts whose happy glow
Is fed by what themselves bestow.

And all these fragrant flowers has twined
About my heart, a fiddler blind !

The poet hath no keener sight,
Than this old man with vision blight,
Who, piercing with the spirit's eye
The veil of his infirmity,
Hath, with his viol's quickening spell,
My pinions warmed to break their shell ;
If I accomplish half the task
He wrought on me — 'Tis all I ask.

D I A L O G U E.

POET.

Round my heart thy viol flings
Rapture, with four magic strings.
If thy bow, with but the spell
Of twelve semitones, can tell,

Like the rod that gold divines,
All the ear's unfathomed mines,
Spells how many wields the pen,
To delight the hearts of men ?

FIDDLER.

Countless as the shore's gray sands
Are the spells the pen commands ;
Earth, and they who on it dwell,
Space and Ocean, Heaven and Hell.
Be thy soul with these chords strung
Fervently, and pen and tongue,
Thrilling deeper, hearts shall raise
Higher than my lowly lays.

POET.

By the measure thou hast taught
I will sell what life hath bought,
I will give thy song a shape,
Ere its fleeting tones escape. .

FIDDLER.

Mock thou not my humble art !
With my bow, God touched thy heart,
And to Him ascend its strains,
While thy song on Earth remains.



To Frederic Berly.



New Music.

YOU hear an air that thrills your ears
With memories of bygone years.
Forgetting age and care and pain,
Your soul puts on its youth again ;
And she who shone in beauty's pride,
Long faded, sparkles at your side ;
And as, in spring, old wines ferment
When buds and leaves on vines are blent,
So through your quickened pulses pour
The effervescent joys of yore.
Again her name drops from your lip
Into the brimming cup you sip ;

Nay, in the amber wine you trace
The image of her cherished face.
Oh days of youth and wild delight !
Oh gladdening waters, sweet as bright,
Which memory's melodious spells
Uncover like the Desert's wells !

Another sits in gloom and pain
Whilst you drink in the rapturous strain.
As East winds open ancient wounds,
His bleed afresh at those sweet sounds ;
It is the air, that lured him on
To wretchedness in days bygone,
Which now relumes the witching gaze
Of those dark eyes whose treacherous rays
To ashes burnt his youth so fair,
And left his life one long despair :
His mistress by a rival bought,
Or worse, his wife's dishonor wrought,
Recur, as with those notes arise
His heart's burnt-offerings to the skies,

And leave it, when the strains expire,
An altar blackened by the fire.
The sun grows pale, the air is chill,
Grim skeletons his vision fill ;
Ah ! in the tomb no terrors lie,
For thus to suffer is to die !

Now, like fond brothers, hand in hand,
Both tread some fair and unknown strand,
In measure ; when the magic wand
Of SCHUMANN sways the tuneful band,
Or WAGNER's glorious voices smite
The ear, and unsipped joys unlock,
As when the Patriarch Israelite
With faith-tipped rod struck Horeb's rock.

One, wafted to the fairy isle
On ocean's softest summer smile ;
One, 'scaped with life and nothing more
From ocean's fiercest wintry roar :

Both drink its odors breeze — beguiled
From thicket and savanna wild ;
Both taste its tropic fruitage filled
With sweetness from the sun distilled :
Both bask in blooms that never change
From seaside up to mountain range ;
Till to their ravished senses seem
Life's bliss and bale an equal dream,
And each, in extacy, forgets
The past — its joys and its regrets.



Stradivarius.

WHEN the viol hath been strung,
And the master's hand hath wrung
Speech from every hermit-tongue
That unseen dwells

Within its cells ;
Hoarse its voices until taught
With his rapture to consort,
Or, in sweet concert, to show
Sympathy with human woe ;

Then, in their retiredness,
Craving constantly to bless
Air and ear with tuneful stress,
Each^r mellower grows
In its repose,

Till a fuller choral swell,
And a softer waning spell,
Are the echoes that respond
To the master's magic wand.

When the viol's tones aspire
Upward, like the breath of fire,
Does the master's soul inspire

Alone its sighs

And symphonies ?

Or, do angels with the strain
Seek their long-lost home again,
Soaring in melodious throng
On the pinions of his song ?

When a friend hath ceased to groan,
While we o'er his coffin moan,
And deplore his spirit flown,

Dare we maintain

That ne'er again

Shall that unstrung harp be wound
And the Master's glory sound ?
May not, then, the lute enshrine
Unseen spirits half divine ?



To William Young.

Ignes Fatui.

A DREAM the Limner's waking eyes
 May strive to seize
As vainly as the bark that flies
 Before the breeze ;

A strain that flutters in the ear
 Yet shuns the throat,
As hushes, when you draw too near,
 The linnet's note ;

An echo which, within a vale,
 Responds no more
Than a beloved one, by the gale
 Cast dead ashore ;

The stations of the stars at noon,
The silvery wake
Poured by the horn of last night's moon
Upon the lake ;

The memory of April's grace
When trees are bare,
Or of December's frosty face
When June is fair ;

To strike from air those sparks of bliss,
In solitude,
Which seemed eternal when your kiss
Its fellow wooed ;

To ask a friend the boon yourself
Had freely given,
And find him dearlier prizing pelf
Than Love or Heaven ;

To toil from dawn till day is old
 With bleeding hands,
Yet fail to find one grain of gold
 In mocking sands ;

So seem and such the shapes that throng
 Him who pursues—
Endeavoring to entrap in song—
 The wayward muse.



To John E. Russell.

Dawn at Midnight.

ALONE upon the Spouting Rock

I hear its voices roar,
And watch the baffled surges shock
Against the iron shore.

The wind grows bolder—not a cloud

Restrains the sweeping breath
I've seen rend ships—till mast and shroud
Whirled in a dance of death.

Against the sky, with swollen sail,
A bark now ploughs the deep ;
Her freight, perchance, but seed this gale
Shall sow, and Ocean reap.

God speed those whom the winds pursue
This wild yet starry night ;
And keep my heart until I view
Her casement's promised light.

Sail on ! O bark, through every change
Of season and of sky ;
Within the haven of yon grange
My hopes at anchor lie !

The Charge.

CANTER on! canter on! gaily we go;
Let no betrayal our trumpeters blow;
Till we behold on yon summit the foe,
 Loose not the bugle's wild breath;
Then to its sound we will bound o'er the ground,
 Jubilant unto the death.

Slacken your pace as we rise yonder slant;
Tighten your girths! let your weary steeds pant.
Hark! 'tis the enemy's rude battle-chaunt:
 Grow to your saddles, my men!
We're on the hill!—blow your will, bugles shrill!
 Now for a crash in the glen!

The Moon and the Beacon.

HONEY moon ! Honey moon !

Though — this April night —
Ocean, bay, and dark lagoon
Revel in thy light,
Will to-morrow see thy rays
Where to-night they gleam,
And my young bride's tender gaze
Still with gladness beam ?

Beacon light ! Beacon Light !

On yon lonely shore,
Shining, faith-like, every night,
Where the breakers roar !

Like a beating heart, thy flash,
Fed by human care,
Cheers the Mariner when crash
Tempests through the air.

Maiden fair ! Maiden fair !
While the orange wreath
Sheds its fragrance o'er thy hair,
Let thy balmier breath
Vow that, like the Beacon's light,
Thou wilt ever shine
For the lover who to-night
Links his fate to thine.

La Chocolatière.

BRIGHT are thine eyes, my pretty little maid,
As diamonds sunk in jet ;
Brown is thy cheek, as shadows in the glade
By eve for lovers set.

Lissome and smooth thy fairy-moulded shape
Which gossamer muslins press,
As clouds around the Jungfrau's summit drape
Her snows with mute caress.

Sometimes a thrill shoots through the sweet repose
In which thou art enchained,
And like the flush of summer-lightning glows
Thy cheek with azure veined.

Say ! dost thou, then, a song of spirits hear,
Inaudible to me ;
Or, on his throne in Dreamland's moonlit sphere,
Thy young heart's monarch see ?

Say ! if the black braids of the silken hair
In which thy face is noosed
Are but a witchingly-deviséd snare
To pinion souls seduced ?

For — that thy fawn eyes bait no ambuscade
Could I but fondly trust —
I'd kneel so low to thee, O pretty maid,
My brow should kiss the dust !

To my Niece Louise.



Dolores.

HER ear to all the litanies

Of brooks and whispering leaves alive,
Pure as the violet-laden breeze,
Dolores hath no sin to shrive.

By fawns she's welcomed in the fields ;
In groves by birds with vying throats,
To swains nor lords no heed she yields,
But in sweet peace serenely floats,

Till, in the twilight hour, she hears

A voice that wakes her sleeping heart,
Now, breathing tones that melt to tears,
Now, blasts at which her pulses start.

Sphinx-like her face, while tender fires

Soften the glaciers of her breast,
And pleasing fears and new desires
Like fairy voices thrill her rest.

Her ear thenceforth his trumpet is ;

Her soul a lyre within his hands ;
Her eye sees only light in his,
Who twines her fate with silken strands.

Titian to Stella.

I LOVE thee that thou dost inspire
My ice-bound heart with quickening fire,
And makest me forget,
One silver moment, that I'm old,
When warms thy breath my lips, from cold
Indifference to regret.

As, in gray autumn's dreary days,
Their pallid cheeks the asters raise,
To catch the sun's stray kiss ;
So, ere the Arctic night sets in,
Thy radiance shall my last thread spin
With rapture's golden bliss.

Oh, thrilling touch ! Oh, glowing eyes !
Whose beams, like stars in wintry skies,
Shine harmless on the snow !
Harmless as when, in tempest dark,
The palmer from the steel's cold spark
A kindling flame would blow.

Yet, phantom dear of buried days
That veilest, with a sunset haze,
The future's gloom and sorrow,
Stay ! that the thought of thee may bless,
With one bright ray of happiness,
The dark clouds of to-morrow !

To Julia.



At Last !

WHAT care I whence the cold wind blows,
Or if yon skies be drear,
Now that my longing arms enclose
Her whom I hold most dear !

What care I for the wealth and power
That light an emperor's throne,
Since that kiss made — 'tis scarce an hour —
Those tender lips my own !

Enfin !

QU'IMPORTE d'où souffle la bise
 Qui teint en gris les cieux,
Puisqu'enfin, dans mes bras, Élise
 Répond à tous mes vœux !

Qu'importent la puissance et l'or
 Qui luisent près d'un Roi,
Puisque, cédés leurs doux trésors,
 Ses lèvres sont à moi !

Let Warriors chase the phantom-light
Of glory o'er the field,
And Tyrants with oppression's might
Make sullen nations yield.

Let Orators with stormy breath
Upheave the human seas,
And Heirs rejoice when pallid death
Gives them the golden keys !

I'll only live henceforth for her
Who only lives for me ;
The Vine that clasps the hoary Fir
Makes glad the lonely tree !

What though death lurk in its embrace,
Both men and trees must die ;
What matters then my resting-place,
Or when I in it lie !

De la gloire que le soldat
Cherche le feu follet,
Et de son sceptre les appas
Le Tyran détesté.

Que l'Orateur, comme l'orage,
Soulève l'assemblée,
Et l'ainé, de son héritage,
Touche la clef dorée.

Désormais pour elle je vis
Qui pour moi seul existe ;
La vigne verte autour de lui
Réjouit le sapin triste !

Que ses baisers cachent la mort,
Tout sapin doit mourir ;
Qu'importe quand le même sort
Me condamne à périr !

Her tears shall bless with flowers my grave,
Until her soul take wing ;
As o'er the fallen Fir shall wave
The vine-bells many a spring.



Ses pleurs éclateront en roses
Dessus mon toit dernier ;
Comme, du pin déchu écloses,
Les fleurs de vigne en Mai.



Still !

SLAKED is the burning desert-thirst,
And thou art wholly mine !
Stilled is the heart I thought must burst
When throbbing close to thine !

Calmed the strange sense of vague unrest
That shipwrecked mariners feel
Ere, through the tropic breaker's crest,
They launch their untried keel :

Framed of the lordly tree which gave
Them shelter from the blast,
When, beachward high, the strong-armed wave
Their senseless bodies cast.

Like them on desolation's isle

My heart was doomed to rove,
Until beneath thy sunny smile
It woke to hope and love.

With fire they carved the giant bole
Unconscious of its fate ;
With flame I shaped thy stately soul
To carry mine as freight.

In it, through passion's surges driven,
I float beyond their roar.
And we, O Love ! are nearer Heaven
Than when we left the shore.

The Mariner's Betrothed.

MORNING-STAR of drear November,
Peering o'er yon wild lagoon,
Last thy radiance I remember,
Sparkling on that eve in June.

As we two came forth together,
From the porch with roses pied,
Blushed I, when he asked me whether
I would be a sailor's bride.

Then, invoking thy soft splendor
Lingering in the pale blue West,
Words he whispered, true and tender,
Till I sank upon his breast.

With the twilight, ah ! he vanished,
Vanished to return in May.
Oh ! 'tis sad to love one banished
To the ocean's desert way !

But though day thy lustre hideth,
Star of love ! from morn to night,
In the deep lagoon abideth
Still thine image, truthful, bright.

And though far his bark be riding,
Friendly sea or stormy wave,
In my heart's deep springs abiding
Shines his image fair and brave.

Man Overboard!

THE night was dark, and in the tortured sea
Our laden vessel labored heavily.
I had the helm, and standing by my side
Was Harry Thorn, his widowed mother's pride;
When, from the poop, a tiger-billow bore
My hapless messmate off, with sullen roar.
A coop, long emptied of its feathered crew,
Our only life-buoy, quick as thought I threw.
He clutched it, and sang out, "Haul in the line!"
O God! not fastened? Whose the sin? Not mine!
"Man overboard—up helm."—The ship we wear,
And fiercer through our shrouds the storm-fiends tear;
Till break of day, we scoured the raging main,
But never saw poor Harry Thorn again!

To Carrie.



Catechism.

LOVER.

MAIDEN, whom I fain would woo,
Tell me truly—What can'st do?
Nay—a moment let the lute,
That just won my ear, be mute;
Nor inflame my soul again
With thy voice's siren strain.
Speak me calmly—speak me true;
Candor thou shalt never rue.

MAIDEN.

I can reckon and can read,
Deftly say my prayers and creed,
9*

In the church know when to kneel,
And will neither lie nor steal ;
Thus far have been reared in ease,
Learning chiefly how to please ;
And with song and merry smile,
Hours of sadness to beguile.

LOVER.

This is well, but not enough.
Life is made of sterner stuff—
From the altar dateth bliss,
From it sometimes wretchedness.
Ask thy heart if it feel sure
Thou can'st care and want endure—
Sorrow also—nor repine
At the lot that made them thine.

MAIDEN.

If my will and power I knew,
Me thou would'st not seek to woo ;

Were my virgin soul not wax,
Which Life's stern impression lacks,
Waiting till Love's mystic seal
Stamp its fate for woe or weal,
Thou would'st find the vow a curse,
"Take for better or for worse."

LOVER.

Sweeter honey yield thy lips
Than the bee from clover sips,
Sweeter tones than thrill thy lute
Breathes thine answer to my suit ;
Can'st thou not divine my fate,
Whether bright or desolate ?
Speak ! For if deceived in thee,
Life and Love must bankrupt be.

MAIDEN.

Ere a charger thou dost buy,
Thou can'st all his paces try ;

Buy him, and, if good, he'll grow
With the grace thy hands bestow ;
Yet the jockey's cunning task
May his imperfections mask ;
If his value thou would'st know,
Must upon a journey go.

LOVER.

Thy comparison I see.
Like the charger's pedigree,
I but know by whom thou'rt bred,
Trained and to the market led ;
Can but scan thy shape and grace,
As I would his form and pace.

MAIDEN.

Proof than this can'st have no other,
Know'st my father and my mother
Who, unless their life's a lie,
Daily bless the priestly tie ;

Though they'll weep when I depart
Cleaving to another's heart.

LOVER.

I will take thee for my wife ;
Worthless, else, would be the life
Which henceforth belongs to thee.
Say — shall thine belong to me ?

MAIDEN.

As upon the fountain's brink
Pilgrims pause before they drink,
Pause to cool the heated brow —
Pause I — well, then, here's my vow.

Metathalamium.

WHEN, like a perfume, from thy lips
The "May-Queen's Song" first through me stole;
Like dawn above the mountain tips,
Thy voice made morning in my soul;
Until expired the tender strain
And silence quenched the rosy light,
When, though I woke to day again,
Within my spirit all was night.

When horn and viol banished thought,
Yet summoned every sense that slept,
My hand thy grasp with ardor sought,
And through the dance's maze we swept.

But while thy feet, with tireless tread,
Fulfilled its orb like Dian chaste,
My reeling brain with frenzy sped
Until my clasp released thy waist.

We married—nor would I have changed
My lot that morn for crown of gold.
A month has flown—are you estranged?
I find you silent, thoughtful, cold.
I am but mortal—whilst you sang
In blissful dreams I sat entranced,
And, when the waltz its summons rang,
Whilst I had breath and sight I danced.

But when or song or dance expires,
A gold cord snaps—a spell is broke.
'Tis sad but true that mortal fires,
Like those of brushwood, end in smoke.
You promised me to make life bright—
With smiles—then why that pouting glance?
You cannot sing from morn till night
Nor I from night till morning dance.

Zampita.

OH ! she was wondrous fair,
And when I said
“Thee would I wed,”
She listened to my prayer ;

But not as woman hears,
When thrills the oath
Of plighted troth
In her expectant ears ;

Rather as Mary Saint
In altared shrine,
With look benign,
Receives a sinner's plaint,

Who asks a happier lot ;
 Though to his suit
 The Virgin, mute
But gracious, answers not,

Until his soul shall rise,
 Through saving grace,
 Her living face
To meet in Paradise.

* * * * *

I said, "When we are wed,
 My Paradise
 Shall be thine eyes."
Then she — "My heart is dead."

I answered — "Only seared,
 And by the blight
 Of broken plight,
To me far more endeared."

“Black is the carboneer,
Who burns the oak
To blacker coke,
And makes the woodlands drear.”

“But blacker yet his soul,
Who kindled thine
With base design,
And left its blossoms coal.”

“My love with tender art
And patient aim,
Shall blow its flame
Upon thy cindered heart.”

At this, she dimly smiled,
As in a grief
One finds relief,
By curious tales beguiled.

And when my suit I pressed,
She, still in sorrow,
Sighed, " Well, to-morrow ;
Now, prithee, let me rest."

The morrow came, and sealed
Our fates in one ;
Fair smiled the sun ;
Gaily the church-bells pealed.

* * * * *

As when you chance to feel
A limb of wood ;
It chills your blood,
As might the surgeon's steel ;

I found the wounded pride
Of Love's keen smart,
Had left her heart
Not charred, but petrified.

For years I've vainly striven
With ardor true,
To fire anew
That heart by sorrow riven.

For years my lips have tasted
The mocking bliss,
The marble kiss,
Until my frame is wasted.

And when I pray for death,
Her lips, still fair,
Add to my prayer,
Amen ! with icy breath !

By the Coffin.

DID she ever, ever love me ?
Never, never shall I know,
Till I join her soul above me
And her body down below.

When I sought to draw the fire
Of affection from her eye,
Mine alone was the desire,
Mine the smile, or mine the sigh.

See her like a statue sleeping !
Yet no colder is she now
Than when living — and my weeping
Failed to melt her icy brow.

Yet that brow at times, with flashes
Of a cindered past relumed ;
Like the runes that flare in ashes
Of old letters just consumed.

Did its snow conceal a mystery,
Shame or crime beneath its crust ;
Or but cover up the history
Of all human pride and dust ?

For the last time let me kiss her,
Shut the lid—I'll weep no more—
Since my heart will only miss her
As a prisoner the door

Of his cell shut to at dawning
To exclude all day the light,
And at eventide set yawning
To admit a starless night !

To the Poet of Farringford.

A FRIEND,* who in the South now waits,
 Until the Sesamé
Of Peace shall cleave his prison-gates,
 Thus spake to me of thee:

“He dwells in Britain’s fairest isle,
Within an ivy-kirtled pile,
 Gray as its Saxon age ;
Mid flower-brocaded turfs, that lie
On chalk cliffs, like the minstrelsy
 That broidereth his page.

* William H. Hurlbert, since escaped from Richmond.

“He dwells afar from Caerleon
Where Arthur’s dawning glories shone,
Nor near to Camelot,
Though, in his walks, the spectral throng
Of Paladins applaud his song,
While weeps Sir Launcelot.

“’Twas there I heard his silver voice,
In spells his pen had cast, rejoice,
And saw its tones evoke
The calm procession of his *Dream*
Of Women Fair, until the stream,
Of song, by night was broke.

“Next day, at even’s favoring tide
I left the Isle ; and by his side,
To speed the parting guest,
Stood she, who held in either hand
A flaxen child with golden band
Clasped round a crimson vest.

“As on them burned day’s orange glow,
My fancy pictured Ivanhoe,
When Love had crowned his joys,
Rowena in the bloom of life,
The mother, still with beauty rife,
Of his two Saxon boys.”

Moss-rose Pendennis, when he cast
His petals on our Northern blast,
To scent its wintry breath,
Swore thou alone of living men,
Within his widely-reaching ken,
Would’st long survive thy death.

Another* came, whose sparkling glow
Might vie with the inspiring flow
Of Rhone or fairy Rhine,
And swore thou wert no anchorite;
For he once saw thee half the night,
The cup with garlands twine.

* William Howard Russell.

Two portraits of thee near me lie ;
In rapture on the Eastern sky
 The younger seems to gaze ;
The other of the Western sun
In autumn, ere the day is done,
 Reflects the saddening rays.

But not thy living fame nor face,
Though tongue or bust their image trace,
 Before my soul arise ;
I see thee as in after days,
Posterity shall with his lays
 The minstrel canonize.

To Charles H. Ward.

Modern Faith.

HARRO Haring, in his bed,
Woke one night with aching head,
Having dreamed that God was dead.

Freely flowed his tears
Till, on Denmark's mountains dawning,
Came the radiance of the morning,
To dispel his fears.

In the watches of the night
Sometimes comes an ugly sprite,
Saying, "Faith has lost her bright,

Reconciling beam."

But when Charlie, with a caper,
Brings me up the morning paper,
See I 't was a dream!

If its columns do not lie,
Faith, I think, can never die,
While one man is left to buy
What his neighbors sell —
One, who on the share-list glancing,
Sees it falling or advancing,
Shrink with Faith or swell.

As the horse another wisp
Snatches of his fodder crisp
From the hay-rick — I the lisp
In a column near,
Read of Walbridge patriotic,
Shedding light on this chaotic,
War-beladen year.

Next beside the Hiramade,
Demonstrates a "dress parade"
That our boys to this crusade
 Body give and mind.
Next, some demagogue deceiving
Speaks to gaping crowds believing
 He to self is blind.

On another page, unrolls
Secretary Chase the scrolls
Which revive rich Bankers' souls,
 Steeped in care and sorrow —
"If you but elude a protest —
What you owe is surely no test
 Of what you can borrow."

Though I see in "Foreign News"
Fresh Napoleonic brews,
Yet, of iron-sided screws
 Cherbourg's harbor full

Worries, but scares not, the skittish,
Atlas-shouldered, jolly, British,
Lion-hearted Bull.

For the price of Consols still
Shows that Faith, with ready till,
Takes grist to the British mill
And its hoppers feeds;
While the growl of bears satanic,
Preaching ruin, preaching panic,
Still no panic breeds.

Who shall say that Faith has flown,
Mourn her loss with tear and groan,
While Napoleon on his throne
Sceptic Frenchmen trust?
While we pay our parish preacher —
To maintain each living creature
Is but concrete dust ;

Or but charcoal which no fire,
Unfannéd by him, can inspire
With the brighter, purer, higher
Ray of Koh-i-noor —
While, for cash the road to glory
Opens still through Purgatory,
By the Bishop's door.



In Fifth Avenue.

My husband is neither young nor old,
 Though his hair is turning gray,
My temper is neither hot nor cold,
 Yet I mope the livelong day.

My house is neither spacious nor small ;
 'Tis built in the usual way,
And nicely furnished from garret to hall,
 Yet I mope the livelong day.

We have children twain, a boy and a girl,
 My every wish they obey,
Tom 's a rough diamond and Maud a pearl,
 Yet I mope the livelong day.

Abroad I may either walk or drive,
As it suits my humor's play.
We breakfast at nine and dine at five,
And I mope the livelong day.

The bees that feed all winter on honey
To flowers return in May.
All seasons are like, with plenty of money,
Yet I mope the livelong day.

My husband's the bee that gathers the sweets,
In sunshine he makes the hay,
And drudges in rain through muddy streets,
While I mope the livelong day.

When dinner is over, he, like a drone,
On the sofa snoozes away,
And over the paper I mope alone
At night as I moped all day.

They called me lovely when I was young,
And fond of praise and display ;
'Tis a tale that's told and a song that's sung,
For—I mope the livelong day.

An old admirer unto me came,
Resolved new homage to pay,
And, tenderly sighing, whispered his flame
As I moped at home one day.

He came just after the postman's bell—
My husband was far away—
And when he swore that he loved me well,
I moped rather less that day.

An Indian god in a jewelled shrine
Condemned forever to stay,
Like me—if alive—would mope and pine
When alone the livelong day.

From worship to earthly love is a stride—

A stage without a relay—

The abrupt transition touched my pride,

And I moped no more that day.

He seized my hand, and I felt a spark,

His eye shot a wicked ray

Which I sometimes see again in the dark,

When I've moped the livelong day.

Though I forgave him, he wanted still more !

I scorned my vows to betray,

But ordered him to be shown the door,

And moped no more that day.

And I sometimes wish that this stupid life

Might finish without delay.

I'm a virtuous, uncomplaining wife,

But I mope the livelong day.

And when to our marble church we go,
I wonder why people pray ;
For I have everything here below,
Yet I mope the livelong day.



Tom's Funeral.

HARRY.

WE shall be late for dinner!

What is it stops the carriage?

Ah! burying some poor sinner!

'Tis not the hour for marriage.

ARTHUR.

Have patience, Hal! A regiment

Of men-at-arms amain

Is clashing in its swift ascent

The snail-paced funeral train.

“Right flank! Five paces backward fall!”

The soldiers stand at rest;

Bassoons and cornets louder brawl;

The drummers roll their best.

The hearse's sable steeds curvet;
The crowd swells like a wave;
The undertaker 's in a pet;
The pall-bearers look grave.

HARRY.

We shall be late for dinner—
John, push along your horses!
This poor old confined sinner
May make us lose two courses.

ARTHUR.

To me this confluence in the street,
Of warrior and of mummer,
Seems as should Spring and Autumn meet
No intervening summer.

From adverse points they each advance,
Halt, pass, and onward go;
As, in the figures of the dance,
Two parties *dos-à-dos*.

Voltaire said "all roads lead to Rome;"
"Or Death," might tip the phrase;
Be sea or grave our shrouded home,
There end our devious ways.

* * * *

The funeral snake now crawls this way:—
Ah! so poor Tom is dead!
It seems to me but yesterday,
That I beheld him wed.

HARRY.

We shall be late for dinner —
Pray, what was his profession?
Rich, doubtless — or much thinner
Would be this dense procession.

ARTHUR.

'Tis thus remorse, for past neglect,
Prompts us to make amends.
Perhaps these mourners half suspect
That Tom in Heaven hath friends.

Ere unthrift wasted his estate,
Want never left his door;
And he, when ruined, change of fate
Heroically bore.

HARRY.

We shall be late for dinner—
Of all this what's the meaning?
If he was plucked, poor sinner,
These crows will find no gleanings!

ARTHUR.

He had some patrimony left—
The oyster Fortune's shell—
An entail out of reach of theft,
And of his power to sell.

He married—such a termagant!
And then felt doubly poor;
She eyed his former friends askant,
Till they forsook his door.

The only friend that stanch remained,
Despite her freezing breath,
Was one, who, when his heart you've gained,
Caresses you to death.

His praises have so oft been sung,
He needs no other bard;
For still, at spiggot or at bung,
Men worship Saint Otard.

It is not to Tom's wasted life
These mummers homage pay;
But partly to enrage the wife,
In death he holds at bay.

-

Besides, he came of gentle stock;
Has kinsmen temperate,
Who build their faith on Grace Church rock,
Are pillars of the State.

I should have paid this farewell call,
If I had only known —
Before this dinner and this ball —
Poor Tom "the sponge had thrown."

HARRY.

We're off—now then, for dinner;
We shall just save our time.—
I'm sorry your poor sinner
I knew not in his prime!

To Hiram, King of Tyre.



A Royal Abode.

IF to dwell within a Palace,
Out of reach of want or malice,
Is a king to be;
If the loftier one's *story*,
Higher soars one's earthly glory,
Few are kings like me.

Though a monarch, I've no nation
To preserve from grim starvation,
And no uproar fear;
But throughout my city stately
Suffered am to walk sedately,
Free from scowl or sneer.

Me surround no courtiers pettish
With their capers etiquettish,
Cereemonious, cold,
Jealous heartburns ill concealing,
One because the other, kneeling,
Doth my slippers hold.

Mine's a life of royal pleasure;
All my days are days of leisure,
All my nights the same;
When I take an extra bottle,
Cares my throat-latch never throttle,
No one cries out "shame."

And the visions of my slumber
Haggard faces ne'er encumber;
At my will I rise,
And whene'er it suits my fancy,
Rolls and coffee brings up Nancy
With the dark-blue eyes.

From my larder's tempting plenty,
Dine alone or dine with twenty
Or a hundred guests,
Sit till our convivial laughter
Shakes the glasses, thrills the rafter,
Mingling songs and jests.

Lots of servants round the table;
Lots of grooms within the stable;
Nay, a Commodore,
With his word and gesture serious,
On the quarter-deck imperious,
Is not worshipped more.

Of all this the glad fruition
Hold I upon one condition,
Sometimes hard to fill —
Hard as Fessenden must drudge it
When compelled to shape his budget,—
I MUST PAY MY BILL.

To Francis Morris.



Beckford.

My eyes are dim, my thin locks gray,
The avalanche of years hath bent
My frame—will it suspend decay
If, at your bidding, I repent?

Repent! Do monarchs abdicate
When senses wane and pleasures cloy?
Doth avarice expropriate
The wealth which buys no other joy?

The hoary king retains his throne,
The miser's palsied grasp his hoard ;
Shall I the crumbling fane disown
Of which my will is still the lord ?

Repent ! While Love's bright galaxies
Still glisten in the blue of sleep,
And shapes once worshipped greet my eyes
When on the slope I turn to peep ?

Read in yon bark that quits the shore,
The tale, by years and tempests told,
Of planks, without their sap of yore,
Wave-twisted from her builder's mould.

Yet, while she floats, intrepid tars
Confide their all to her, nor pause
To think how frail the screen that bars
Them from the ocean's myriad jaws !

She hath her legends of rare freights,
Of food to starving peoples borne,
Of silks and teas from China's gates
And spices from the Isles of Morn.

When weary of such "yarns" her crew
Cast webs, like spiders, to the shore ;
Their watch, in tempests, they fight through,
Then sleep as were the battle o'er.

If they beyond such hourly care
Look not, whose cares may cease to-morrow,
Shall I that drift I know not where
Weigh down my sinking years with sorrow ?

The wind is rising ; let me glean,
From Time's heaped sands, such golden grains
As miners gather up between
The walls of long-exhausted veins.

To A. T. B.

To a well-known Camellia.

PRAY, who was Lady Hume ? and why her blush ?

Was it a sad or sweet emotion

Which manifested on her cheek this earliest flush

Of dawn awakening the ocean ?

Was it the voice of homage women prize,

Or undreamt Love's abrupt confession ?

Or did the mute reproach of sorrowing eyes

Beyond all speech make intercession ?

Was it the flash of anger half controlled,
Or shame's ill-maskéd hue of panic ;
Or the resentment of a virtue bold
Withstanding passion's burst volcanic ?

We'll hope that she, whose name upon thy bloom
Shall outlast all the princes and the powers,
Lacked not a soul her beauty to perfume
Like thee, O Queen ! but of the scentless flowers ;

But, like the matron fair I may not name,
Her blush betrayed a soul transcending
Her charms, and, through them, glowing to proclaim
Its grace with their effulgence blending.

To John Nugent.

Mediaeval Art.

THE limner's pious task was done,
His Crucifixion painted;
And, in the convent, many a nun
In saintly rapture fainted.

The friars from the abbey came
To see the work uncovered;
The abbot asked the painter's name
Who, trembling, near it hovered.

The monks were loud, the painter dumb,
The lordly abbot whispers,
“There’s our refectory! Limner, come,
Before we pass to vespers!”

The painter spake: “Your Lordship knows
True art needs inspiration;
Pray, what’s the subject you propose
For Prayer, or Jubilation?”

“Sir Limner,” said the lordly Priest,
“We care not what your choice is,
Provided it, like Cana’s feast,
The pious heart rejoices.”

Limner and abbot made accord—
Now in a manger shabby
Fades out that “Supper of our Lord,”
The glory of the abbey.

To William Henry Hurlbert.

Modern Sketching.

HERE upon the river's marge,
Is the scene I thought so fair :
Whilst I sketch its beauties rare,
Smoke your *puro* in the barge.

Yonder oak the creepers bind
Shall my centre be—its roots
O'er the water stretch their shoots
Like the fingers of the blind.

First I trace the stream so stately,
Say — a victor's silver car
With its train of spoils of war,
Parting crowds — of trees — sedately.

From its mother-fountain weaned,
With its faults the wayward river
Rolls on heedlessly forever,
Now an angel — now a fiend !

So — my water seems all sky ?
Wait till I put in my glaze,
With its soft aerial haze
Shall both cheat and please your eye

Poor old tree ! with creepers twined,
River Time is slowly draining
Those few roots their hold retaining,
True to grandeur undermined.

Trees and grandeur—all must tumble,
All must topple in the stream—
“Life”—says Calderon—“is a dream”—
Art is proud if man be humble!

Here, upon my canvas planted,—
This old tree may wave forever
Fadeless leaves, above the river,
Underneath a sky enchanted!

Fra Angelico, the painter,
While his brush was silvering angels
Hovering over gray Evangels,
Felt, one eve, his touch grow fainter.

Never dropped it—passed to glory!
Paints he still in Paradise?
That's a question for the wise—
But for us—enough the story!

Passed — and still his angels cry —
Poised on never-drooping pinions,
Snowy flags of Heaven's dominions —
Hosannah ! in his frescoed sky !

Still his Patriarchs gravely smile,
Whilst we say with softened breath,
Standing where he welcomed death,
“What a beatific style !”

* * * * *

I have finished — saint or sinner, —
Clown complete, or finished Spirit, —
May this morning's work inherit ; —
We, meanwhile, will home to dinner !

Isaac.

THEY, who in the churchyard sleep,
Or the bosom of the deep,
Or beneath the sabre's sweep,
 Are not all that die.
Other loved ones pass away,
Whom we mourn as dead, while they
 With the living lie.

Homeward turns the funeral train;
"Brother! freed from mortal pain,
Thou in warmth wilt rise again
 From thy cold repose;
When the sea its dead shall yield,
And the gorgéd battle-field
 Shall its lips uncloze."

Time dries tears; and jest and laugh
Crown the brimming cup we quaff,
Long before his epitaph
Moss and age efface;
Nay, the shipwreck's fearful story,
Or the combat's victims gory,
Years from memory chase.

But when boyhood's melodies
Shed their dew in festive eyes,
Through soft mists we see arise
Phantom-like, the friend,
Dead yet living, who from home,
Is in exile doomed to roam
To life's dreary end.

Lost and Found.

I. LOST.

*To Major C * * *, U. S. Infantry, reported "dead
on the field of honor" at Gaines' Mill, June 27th, 1862.*

"Sad as the last beam reddening o'er a sail"

"That sinks with all we love below the verge."

A LEGEND of the guillotine,

Or of the gibbet's vengeful cord,

Or of two foes at sunrise seen

To grasp the pistol or the sword,

May for a beat our pulses stop,

While fancy sees the axe descend,

The pinioned felon hopeless drop,

The slayer o'er his victim bend.

When one, of old a comrade, dies,
His life-march flits before our ken,
Dim passing shadows that arise
Upon a wall, to fall again;
But if we're told some dearer brow
Lies cold 'neath Azrael's marble seal,
As to a cannon-shot, we bow,
And nearer to the grave-yard feel.

But fancy's self-adjusted glass
May not include the vaster woe
Of crews, the storm-fiends, as they pass,
In ocean's barren furrows sow:
Or of gay legions, which with pride
Of crested ranks clothed hill and dale,
Swept down by battle's furious tide,
Like stately grain by summer's hail.

'T was thus on me this strife had gleamed
But as an airy pageant's show
Of war's bold game, which well beseemed
Its varying chances' ebb and flow;

Until it, like a mirage, waned,
And bared thy mortal wound — Oh friend!
With whom the parting toast I drained
Was, “May the conflict quickly end.”

The Old Year sank within our bowl,
And, when the New in splendor rose,
I should have wept — heroic soul!
To think thou wouldst not see its close;
To dream the pallid Clotho held,
E'en then, the scissors near thy thread,
And that our goblet-chimes but knelled
Thy fate, to DEATH and GLORY wed.

When I recall thy pensive face,
The smile that smoothed its furrows deep,
The sternness veiled by tender grace,
As lilies screen a lion's sleep;
I feel that we who weep thee are
Poor trimmers who — as sailors guide
Their vessels — waste our souls in care
To follow, not to breast the tide.

A teacher of the Art heroic,
Who precept with example twines,
Nor counterfeits a virtue stoic
Against whose rule his soul repines;
Is he who drills a nation's Youth
The call of Duty to obey,
To fight the fight of RIGHT and TRUTH,
To point — and more, to lead the way.

Such wert thou, Friend, whose loss I mourn
As martial seed! Thy fertile yield
Might, like the Future's garnered corn,
Have bearded many a battle-field.
Thy Country was thy only wife,
Thy troop thy only family;
For her thou hast laid down thy life,
Though they had gladly died for thee!

II. FOUND.

*To Major C * * *, U. S. Infantry, dangerously
wounded and made a prisoner at Gaines' Mill, June 27th,
1862.*

"Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail"

"That brings our friends up from the under world."

MY tears fell on an empty grave,

Yet let them not be shed in vain,

But dedicated to the brave

Whom thousands mourn amongst the slain.

My dirge, in feeble numbers wrought

With pious heart, shall consecrate

Their memory whose death has brought

Such grief as thy imagined fate.

Could tears wake them to life again,
Their forms heroic would arise,
Like trampled grass from quickening rain,
Beneath a Nation's weeping eyes.

Could plaint or song their ears but thrill
As thine awoke to hear my strain,
No pen were dry—no voice were still,
From where they lie to distant Maine.

Yet deem not that my heart retracts
The praise ne'er meant to dim the eye
Of one whose future words and acts
Shall verify his eulogy.

I greet thee as some vessel fair
Her owner hath deplored as lost,
When on his gaze, through summer-air,
Her white sails glisten off the coast.

And up the cliffs glad neighbors rush,
As to a fire — and grasp his hand
Whose moistened cheek the breezes flush
That waft his lost bark to the land.



To Richard Ray Ward.

The Widow of Worcester.

LAST Spring, when Frank had fed the ploughed
and harrowed ground with seed,
A fearful cry tore by us with the South wind's
wingéd speed.

But we hoped it was a nightmare, till the news
was brought from town

That the horde of Charleston maniacs had torn
our banner down.

In my bitter grief and anguish keen I felt the
ancient ire

Of Bunker Hill and Lexington course through
my veins like fire ;

Till, as lightnings cease when breaks the dark
cloud's heart upon the land,
I wept, when, on my thin gray locks, I felt
Frank's manly hand,
And saw my grandsire's musket gleam within
his clenched grip,
And read the clear and stern gray eye that
chid his quivering lip;
Read that the eye would smile no more, until
it saw the foe,
While the lips were loth to shape the words,
"Dear Mother, I must go."
So I sealed them with a kiss, dried up my tears,
and filled his sack,
And, at dawn, upon his home my only darling
turned his back.

From my cheek, at parting, stole his lips to
whisper in my ear,
"Do not let my Ruth forget me, though I stay
away a year."

Our garden's yield was plenteous, and the
meadow filled the mow,

And Ruth came over twice a day, to milk the
brindled cow.

The rye that Frank had sown sprang up, and
turned from green to gold,

But a stranger's flail within the barn, its owner's
absence told;

Whilst the hireling reaped the grain, I shuddering
thought, but held my breath,

How busy in Virginia were the reaping-hooks
of death!

Thus the troubled summer sped; our note of
time the weekly cheer

Of his letters; and we kissed the one that
numbered half a year.

Yesterday, I heard our boys had crossed the
broad Potomac's flow;

Ruth was reading of the streams where Babel's
weeping willows grow,

When I saw a dove perch on the wire which
flashes by our gate

Words of gladness or of sorrow for the people
and the State.

On that lightning cord, the South wind sighed
a sad Eolian moan;

And my heart grew sick, on looking up, to see
the bird had flown!

Neighbors say there's been a battle, and that
we have lost again;

Was that dove my poor boy's Spirit? Is his
name among the slain?

Hiram Augustus Cranston.

Died Nov. 13th, 1861, aged 21 years.

“**THY** son is sick,” the lightning said,
And to his side the father sped;
But when he reached his darling’s bed,
The bolt had fallen—the boy was dead!

What matters how or when he died?
What grace with virtue in him vied?
In ashes lies the father’s pride,
Who nought to live for hath beside.

As nature kindly deadens pain,
Ere soul and pulse are rent in twain,
Such lessons teach us joy is vain
Till we the blessed mansions gain.

And with less dread we view the end
To which our earthly wanderings tend;
Nay, learn in prayer the knee to bend
To God, our Father and our Friend.



To Louisa Ward Terry.

Penultimate.

SHALL I sit and wait for Death,
With a sigh at every breath
For the hours of gladness flown,
From the Present drear and lone?
Sit, abandoning all hope
Of a brighter horoscope?
Sit, as in a skiff that glides
Down some rapid's angry tides?
Sit, nor strike a valiant oar
To regain the rugged shore?

Yes! I'm weary of the fight;
Ajax-like, my smitten sight
Findeth neither in the day
Nor the night, a cheering ray;
Though the shore by which I glide
Is my native river-side,
And the hamlets that arise
Wear the old familiar guise;
Though yon steeple points the road
Pious forefathers have trode.

In the Church, another Voice
Bids the kneeling fold rejoice.
In the Hall, another Squire
Sits before the yule-log fire;
All are strangers,—why should I
Midst them tarry, but to die?

To John Ward,

The honored Patriarch of the New York Stock Exchange.

Sub Tegmine Fagi.

You marvel I should bid farewell

To cities and to men—

At fifty — and contented dwell

Within this lonely glen.

.

Long be it ere afflictions give

Your undimmed faith the lie,

And teach you it is hard to live

Where those you cherish die!

While here I draw, with every breath,
Of life a balmy share,
Your city seems the haunt of death
When to it I repair.

So many of its palaces
Are sepulchres for me,
Of those who shared a happiness
That never more shall be;

That when my footsteps pause beside
Some old friend's dwelling-place,
A gravestone seems the door, once wide
With welcoming embrace.

And e'en the living few, of all
My comrades I yet meet,
Seem tottering to a funeral,
Along the callous street.

Afar from walls in mourning hung,
And mutes so nigh the tomb,
These forests seem forever young,
These fields dispel my gloom!

I cannot tell the birds apart
Which in my beeches sing,
From those which, last year, taught my heart
To beat in tune with Spring.

The self-same squirrel seems to trip
From branch to branch in glee,
That I beheld, last summer, skip
About the self-same tree.

The night-hawks, at the close of day,
The owl to supper call;
The cricket chirps his roundelay
Beneath my chimney-wall;

And thus it is, I bid farewell
To cities and to men—
At fifty—and contented dwell
Within this lonely glen!



The Poet's Voice.

WHEN the Nightingale's carol is over,
And the widow'd rose pines for her lover,
 Fall his feathers like leaves at her feet;
But when age dulls the voice of the singer,
In his heart-strings its echoes still linger,
 And his spirit sighs strains yet more sweet.

Like a Nightingale, dying in glory,
Malibran, queen of musical story,
 Expired with a trill in her throat;
Yet her genius, the million to capture,
Has left not a throb of the rapture
 With which they once welcomed her note.

But the voice of the Poet immortal
Throws open the heart's golden portal,
 Long after his lips close in Death.
With its music still tremble his pages,
And the echoes of far-distant ages
 Shall sigh their response to his breath.



